Nathaniel Leverone

ILLINOIS HISTORICAL SURVEY

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2012 with funding from
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

http://www.archive.org/details/nathanielleveron00zehn

NATHANIEL LEVERONE,

Pioneer in Automatic Merchandising

Other Books in the Men of Achievement Series

J. Edgar Hoover, Modern Knight Errant

Lowell Thomas, Adventurer

Carl Sandburg, Poet and Patriot

John Foster Dulles, Peacemaker

Ernest Hemingway, Man of Courage

Herbert Hoover, Humanitarian

Dr. Albert Schweitzer, Medical Missionary

Charles F. Kettering, Inventor and Idealist

William L. McKnight, Industrialist

Frank H. Krusen, M.D.,
Pioneer in Physical Medicine

J. C. Penney, Merchant Prince

NATHANIEL LEVERONE

Pioneer in Automatic Merchandising

by

GLADYS ZEHNPFENNIG

Publishers

T. S. DENISON & COMPANY, INC.

Minneapolis

Copyright ©, 1963, by
T. S. DENISON & CO., INC.

All rights reserved, including the right to reproduce this book, or portions thereof, except that permission is hereby granted to reviewers to quote brief passages in a review to be printed in magazines and newspapers.

Printed in the U. S. A.
By The Brings Press

International Copyright Secured
Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 63-19060

658.40092
L 577z

ILL. HIST.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Hearty expressions of gratitude are extended to Mr. William A. Dasho of Dasho-Rogers, Inc. in Chicago. As a devoted friend, associate, and admirer of Mr. Leverone during the thirty years of their acquaintance, Mr. Dasho was instrumental in assembling the human interest material that is vitally necessary to every contemporary biography. By furnishing valuable information, by keeping the lines of communication always open, and by arranging for the author to enjoy a delightful visit with Mr. and Mrs. Leverone, Mr. Dasho did much more than his dedicated share to make this book possible.

162096

Contents

Preface 9

Foreword 11

Chapter One
New Hampshire Boy 15

Chapter Two
A Great Young Life 40

Chapter Three
Points West 52

Chapter Four
An Upward Stumble 77

Chapter Five
Canteen Combats Fatigue 91

Chapter Six
Canteen Goes Nation-wide 103

Chapter Seven
That Tiny Fraction of a Cent 112

Chapter Eight
Canteen Feeds "A Century of Progress" 122

Chapter Nine
A Grand National Story 130

Chapter Ten
Willing to Serve 147

Chapter Eleven
Canteen Enlists 162

Chapter Twelve
His Prophecy Comes True 177

Chapter Thirteen
Any Good Thing That I May Do 195

Chapter Fourteen
A Splendid Little Magazine 219

Chapter Fifteen
"I Am an American" 236

Articles Taken from Canteen Quarterly
by Mr. Leverone 267

Preface

Soon after I became president of the Automatic Canteen Company of America in January, 1962, I realized that the genius and wisdom of Nathaniel Leverone had made the vending industry a vital part of the nation's economy. Mr. Leverone had the courage to disdain a beaten path. He pioneered a new industry. He nurtured his company in the depressed economy of the thirties. He directed its sound growth.

When it was my privilege to become president of the company, Mr. Leverone shared with me his wealth of knowledge. I soon found that he had built a superior organization, dedicated to his philosophy of progress.

The future of the vending industry is great and exciting. But its growth depends upon the evolution of equipment, economic factors and education of the people. None of this can be hastened beyond certain limits of metamorphosis. It is anticipated that within the next eight to ten years the industry will grow from its present two and one-half billion dollar level to a volume of seven billion dollars. Few industries can look forward to a growth potential of such substance, because even with sales of seven billion dollars our industry will be in its infancy.

—Patrick L. O'Malley, President
Automatic Canteen Company of America

Foreword

When a New Hampshire Yankee with a Dartmouth education is transplanted to the Middle West anything can happen. The fission and fusion of Yankee shrewdness and midwest expansiveness can well produce a human nuclear product with a radiation quotient so great that it can affect an entire generation. Such is the case with Nathaniel Leverone, one of six children, who spent his early life in Keene, New Hampshire, and after exposure to the classics at Dartmouth came to Chicago to conquer larger fields.

It took a little time for this brilliant Yankee to find himself. His first real business venture was the manufacture of automotive parts, long before the days of compact foreign cars and the sleek, shiny, powerful vehicles which today drop from the assembly lines like fruit from a well-laden tree.

At that time, Chicago was booming and so was Chicago real estate. Nat Leverone, knowing that growing with a city was like swimming downstream, organized his own company to concentrate those Yankee talents on Chicago expansion, with rare success. With a built-in flair for winning friends and influencing people, he not only concerned himself with civic and educational affairs but used an unsurpassed wit, a rare fluency, and an expansive sense of humor to address meetings and groups all over the nation and develop a national reputation as an after-dinner speaker on many subjects and a presiding officer as well.

But it was in the late twenties that his vision and astuteness truly asserted itself. He could see, where

so many others could not, that the bloom was off the realty boom and that other fields of endeavor should be explored.

If anyone believes that automation is some new industrial concept, let him consider Nat Leverone, who more than thirty-five years ago saw the great possibilities of automation in the vending field. In those early days, vending was regarded by some as a mere novelty, a field of enterprise without dignity or standing where a penny delivered a handful of stale peanuts, a ball of gum with your fortune enclosed, or your incorrect weight. Here then was a field to excite the imagination of a Dartmouth Yankee. He saw automatic vending of merchandise with quality and high standards, and unexcelled service as one of the waves of the future. His imagination conjured up vending machines located in schools and factories, in shops and railway stations, in airports and building lobbies all over the nation where the correct change could produce a pack of cigarettes or a hamburger, a cup of coffee with or without sugar or cream, a cigar or candy bar, and in fact any commodity that was vendible in a machine.

Thus was the Automatic Canteen Company of America, brainchild of Nathaniel Leverone, born. What was equally remarkable was that it was born just before the crash of 1929 and had to struggle through that period when values were in a tailspin, faint-hearted financiers were jumping out of twentieth story windows and a state of material and mental depression hovered over the land like some eerie ghost. From the very beginning, and notwithstanding the conditions which prevailed, Nat Leverone's careful

planning gave Canteen a good start and it rapidly expanded to all areas of the nation. The day came after long and steady growth when Canteen passed the 200 million dollar mark some time ago and it stands out as an impressive monument to the vision, the honesty, the daring, the shrewdness, and the ability of a New Hampshire Yankee.

But interestingly enough, as Canteen grew, so did the many charitable, civic and philanthropic activities of Nat Leverone. He journeyed everywhere to speak without benefit of fees or honorariums to bring a message of good will. He found time in his busy days for the Goodwill Industries and the United Cerebral Palsy organizations. He found time to organize the National Automatic Merchandising Association as the trade association for the vending industry. When the cry went out during World War II for a scrap iron and salvage drive that the steel mills might continue the production of steel for the war effort, he set a pattern for scrap drives which was widely followed throughout the country and as a result of this effort, both the governor of Illinois and the mayor of Chicago asked him to serve in an advisory, non-salaried capacity.

The new fieldhouse at Dartmouth College which bears his name is but one testimony to the many causes which he has espoused.

One field of activity, however, merits very special mention. Nathaniel Leverone is not merely a Christian by profession of faith. He is a working Christian who has truly taken to heart the admonition of the Apostle Paul to the people of Corinth centuries ago when he said that of that trinity of virtues—namely faith, hope, and charity, that the greatest of these was charity.

Few men in the field of Christian leadership have been so active, so generous with time and money and so inspiring by his zeal as Nathaniel Leverone.

Here then is a transplanted Yankee from New Hampshire who has prospered and shared his prosperity; who had faith in his own powers but never forgot the Higher Power from whence our strength and faith comes; who served his country unselfishly whenever the call came; who was dedicated to that climate of freedom and opportunity which made success possible; and who is the living exemplification of what men can accomplish in the moral climate of a free land.

—Senator Everett McKinley Dirksen of Illinois
United States Senate Minority Leader

Chapter One

New Hampshire Boy

Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire, dedicated its new, modern Nathaniel Leverone Field House in May of 1963 in honor of one of its distinguished alumni.

This is the same Nathaniel Leverone who stumbled upward on the Chicago Elevated platform in 1928, felt an idea crystallize in his mind, and subsequently propelled himself and countless thousands of American workers into the center of a dynamic new industry. This is the story of a man who believes in integrity in the market place, in the rewards to be reaped by business people who stress the ideal of SERVICE, and in the spirit of pioneering adventure that continues to throb with vitality on the American industrial scene.

An active Christian and a forthright advocate of the American free enterprise system, Nathaniel Leverone fought the good fight to rejuvenate the old-time vending machine trade and organize the modern automatic merchandising industry, which is expected to become a ten-billion dollar international industry by 1970.

The founder-chairman of Automatic Canteen Company of America has a clear recollection of the state of affairs in the much-abused vending machine industry during the late 1920's. There were honest and dishonest people on all sides of the fence, in that era of Al Capone, get-rich-quick manipulators, and the zooming stock market. Gamblers used merchandise vending machines as a front for gambling, and vending machines and gambling machines often came out of the same factories. Because they were able to attend conventions and exhibit the legal machines they made, manufacturers gained a certain amount of respectability.

"But here was the greatest trouble," Nathaniel Leverone recalls. "There were a great many people in the business, fine people of good character, but mostly men or women who had limited means, and people who had no business experience whatever. They were brought into this business at the time the government had passed the 'blue sky' laws, and were cracking down on dishonest sale of securities. With the government policing the sale of stocks, they saw an opportunity in the vending machine business by making contracts for the exclusive sale of all of their vending machines or for certain territorial rights."

Some of the manufacturers were guilty of misrepresentation. Under the title of "Business Opportunities," they ran very misleading advertisements in the newspapers and trade publications. For example, "Why slave trying to make a few dollars when by investing $10,000 you may make as much as $5,000 a month? You need no previous business experience. It

is an easy and enjoyable business." The manufacturers ran such ads, and many fine people discovered that it was not at all easy and enjoyable. "They paid for exclusive territories or contracted to buy a certain number of vending machines for cash in advance," the Dartmouth alumnus recalls, "and in virtually every case we know of, they were not successful because they did not have a knowledge of business, and without that they could not succeed."

As part of the routine, the prospect would be told that a profit would be guaranteed. They cited as an example the purchase of candy bars for two and one-half cents which would sell for five cents, netting a handsome two and one-half cents profit. To the naive prospect this sounded logical, while anyone with business experience would be keenly aware of how much of that two and one-half cents "profit" would be eaten up by overhead and losses from many causes.

The Canteen man remembers that one scheme involved the sale of territories. The misguided prospect paid for a territory in advance, and in many cases also committed himself to the purchase of a certain number of machines which were paid for in advance.

Another scheme concerned the selling of territories with established installations. This was largely confined to sales from small machines dispensing peanuts, sticks of gum, and penny chocolate bars. These promoters would go to small garages and service stations, and tell the owner they represented some important newspaper or marketing organizations, and wanted to determine whether or not the patrons of these places were interested in purchasing from devices of this

kind. They paid the owner a dollar or two for permitting the installation. The owners were told that inspectors would regularly check to determine whether the devices were in good condition, and if they had sufficient merchandise in them. Of course, the alleged "inspectors" were their own servicemen who filled the machines, collected the coins, and went on their way. When a prospective customer was interested in buying, the agent would take him to two or three places where they had done a fair business, and the prospect would often take the bait and get "exclusive" rights to the territory. Unfortunately, the same "exclusive" would be given to fifty or more people.

Another way to gain an exclusive territory was to sign up to buy machines and products from the manufacturer.

In one of his personal investigations of the trade, Nathaniel Leverone answered an ad which brought him to the Bismarck Hotel. All the tricks of the shyster were used, as he was told, "I am sorry to ask you to wait, but I am just about to tie up an agreement with a customer; I'll be with you in a moment."

The door was left slightly ajar, so the "greenhorn" could appreciate the glowing enthusiasm of the prospective buyer, the calm assurance of the shyster, the comments about the endless profits, ad infinitum. Then the supposed customer (a partner in the scheme) was ushered out, and full attention was given to the patiently waiting Mr. Leverone. The huckster delivered a tremendous sales pitch without once referring to the kind of business under discussion. When the new "prospect" made the logical inquiry, the man as-

sured him that it was the most fabulous business opportunity he would have in his lifetime. Prolonging the suspense to reach a moment of high drama, he stepped to some rich red velvet draperies which obviously concealed an impressive item. With a great flourish, he pulled a gold cord, and revealed three peanut machines of the cheapest sort—a glass globe on an iron stand with a simple mechanism. The potential "customer" was told that the machines could be purchased for ONLY $15.00 when Leverone knew for a fact that they did not cost more than $3.00 to $5.00 to manufacture. He was also told that peanuts could be purchased there for fifteen cents a pound—when the supposed "amateur" knew they wholesaled for eight cents a pound at that time.

Mr. Leverone also followed up on an ad for a fortune in popcorn machines, and was subjected to the same hard-sell. They used the time-honored gimmick of already having fulfilled their expansion plans—"But you look like the type who would be tremendously successful, and we will hold some machines for you until tomorrow!" When the Dartmouth graduate protested his meager qualifications, they cited the success of Nathaniel Leverone, "who is a man with half your ability who has made a fortune." When he was leaving, they asked Nathaniel Leverone what his name was, and to this day he enjoys the recollection of the completely dumbfounded look which greeted that bit of information. He suspected they did not hold the machines for him!

Another trick—not merely confined to the unscrupulous among the vending industry—was following

the death notices and news items on wills. Often a bereaved widow would be approached and told that if she invested in vending machines they would handle all the details for her, take a small percentage from the profits, the balance being paid to her weekly. One known case concerns $5,000 taken from a widow, and $1,000 paid to her after a week as "profit." Encouraged by this bountiful return, she decided to invest more, received one more payment, and then saw the last of the con-men, who, of course, had never invested a penny of her money in anything. This particular form of deceit had nothing to do with the vending industry, but it did contribute to its notorious reputation.

Nathaniel Leverone recalls similar shyster promotions of Coke machines, the ads stating, "You may make $1,000 a week." The "may" was not stressed, and was overlooked by too many gullible souls. Because of the presence of that "may" in the ad copy, the disillusioned operator had no recourse but to accept his loss. Such a statement of earnings is ridiculous, Mr. Leverone points out. If the machine dispensed Coke continuously for eight hours a day, seven days a week, it could not approach that level of profit!

It may be concluded that the vending machine trade in the 1920's resembled "a coat of many colors." There were fringe racketeers and corrupt dealers, there were well-meaning but misguided investors, and there were many honest people of fine character in the business, attempting to earn an honest living, but most often not being successful. Of the manufacturers and operators who were endowed with integrity, good

business judgment and infinite patience, there are some who survive to this day as members of the highly-respected national automatic merchandising industry.

A dauntless New England Yankee with a flexible Dartmouth education, Nathaniel Leverone has been involved in a wide range of public service endeavors, from working as an officer and member of the three-man Executive Committee of the Crime Commission of Chicago, to championing Chicago Youth Week activities for more than two decades. He is honored as a man who has made a phenomenal success of his own business enterprises, and then has devoted his time to the welfare of his fellow citizens.

Although he had been a rather shy boy, he had displayed great flexibility and qualities of leadership. This boy from a small city in New Hampshire was to become a leading citizen of Chicago and a nationally known speaker. As he led a perfectly normal young life in Keene, there was no inkling of this surprising development. After he assumed responsibilities in connection with youth, religious, charitable, educational, fraternal and civic organizations, he became recognized over the nation for his contributions and efforts.

A particular quality of his mind has equipped him admirably for a multitude of challenges. He possesses a marvelously retentive mind which assimilates all that is worthwhile—the meat—of all he hears, sees, or reads. We speak of assimilation; perhaps he dispenses through an unusual process of mental osmosis since he has the faculty of instant recall of any fact.

This ability, coupled with his sense of humor and

his skill with the English language, gave him the rare talent of extemporaneous speech on the platform which took him throughout the country before every conceivable type of audience — ranging from small groups to gatherings of thirty to forty thousand—in every city of importance and in many tiny hamlets where he spoke on as great a variety of subjects as there were audiences. Our New England orator has never in his long career of public speaking accepted an honorarium.

In addition to his many speaking engagements, he gained further identification through numerous national broadcasts in which he participated. He was, at the same time, lauded as an outstanding and successful businessman.

Who would have thought that the shy boy from Keene, New Hampshire, would become one of the nation's outstanding men, and the founder of the great Canteen empire?

* * * * *

Little Nathaniel Leverone was sitting for his portrait in the high-ceilinged Adams' parlor, with its fine old furniture and fireplace and antique bric-a-brac. Sometimes this little boy thought that he would surely become one of the historical fixtures before Miss Adams finished that painting. He and his older brother, Louis, had been taking turns posing for Miss Adams, at her request, over what seemed to be a long period of time to a small boy.

Miss Adams, a sister of the John Adams who was the oldest living Dartmouth alumnus at that time, was an amateur painter. She worked slowly and meticu-

lously; and the handsome youngster, with black curly hair tumbling down his forehead, felt the fidgets building up in him sometimes. Often his mischievous big brown eyes rolled window-ward for glimpses of flowers and trees, or a cat or dog sunning itself, or someone strolling along the tree-lined lane.

Sometimes Mrs. Perkins, the widowed sister of Miss Adams, would sit in the parlor with them, talking about the legendary old days when the Reverend Eleazer Wheelock and his companions had stopped at this very house, an inn at that time, on their ox-cart journey to build Moor's Indian Charity School, which later became Dartmouth College. Then young Nat Leverone would find the time flying on wings. He loved the "feel of history" in this gracious old New England house, which had been an inn, back in that ox-cart era. If he could have looked ahead and known that some day the Cheshire Dartmouth Alumni Association, which he founded and served as president during the time that he was also president of the Chicago Dartmouth Association, would salute that pioneering event with a plaque hanging over the mantel—between his and Louis' portraits—Nat Leverone might have spent some time in quiet contemplation of this surprising development.

Finished with the "sitting session" until next time, the youngster went striding up the street, arms swinging. He waved politely to one of the maiden ladies sitting on her porch and quickened his pace. It seemed as though he had been away from home for quite awhile, and he didn't want to be tempted to tarry right now. He and Louis had this certain problem. All the

spinsters and widows in Keene kept wanting to "borrow" them and fuss over them—and even tie ribbons in their curly hair. They were very nice ladies and they gave them more sweets than they were ever allowed at home, but Nat and his older brother viewed all this attention with mixed emotions. Mamma said the ladies were lonely because they didn't have any little boys of their own, and it was pleasant to have all those extra sweets, but it made Nat and Louis squirm to be treated like "living dolls" or something!

It was good to get home and tag around after Louis and see if there was anything new in the Leverone household. New things were a normal part of life in the spacious Leverone home, three stories high and twenty-one rooms large. Nat Leverone was to the "manor born," as far as such a term was possible in Keene, New Hampshire. Actually, he was born in Wakefield, Massachusetts, on June 26, 1884, but he had been too young to remember Wakefield.

Just taking care of the domestic routine was a production in the big house at Keene. A fine brigade of Irish immigrants marched in and out, furnishing the manual power to keep the household humming. Three women were needed each week just to do the washing and ironing for the family of eight, and the job took three days in the era of washboard scrubbing and flatirons that had to be heated on the big kitchen range.

Robert Leverone, Nathaniel's father, ordered imported oranges and fresh vegetables shipped from Boston, about one hundred miles southeast of Keene. The family ate grapefruit when it was considered a rare

"delicacy" in the days before horticulturists had cross-bred most of the bitter membranes and seeds out of the fruit. Members of the family recall that "Mother used to supervise the cleaning of the grapefruit which were skinned, membranes removed, and cut into pieces and covered with sugar. This was used as a breakfast fruit."

Especially mouth-watering is an account of the "oyster sprees" the family enjoyed. Mr. Leverone would buy a bushel of oysters one-half hour after they were dug, and in two and one-half hours they would be in Keene by train. In something that sounds suspiciously like an oyster orgy—fried, stewed, scalloped and raw—the entire bushel would be gone in a day or two. Lobster was also a favorite. One-half side of beef would be purchased at a time to feed the large household.

In addition to the berries that they grew themselves, they could always find an abundance of wild berry patches around the home at Beech Hill in the summer. Of special delight during the winter might be "hot-house strawberries which were sold for the king's ransom of several dollars a quart." Cabbages, celery, potatoes and carrots were stored in sand in a section of the basement and lasted through most of the winter. The Leverones ate salads when they were considered unusual table fare, sending to the city in the winter for kale and other fresh greens. Nat Leverone and his sisters and brothers grew up eating good food and enjoying it.

The Leverone home was the first in Keene to switch from the old gas jets to electricity, which was

wired through the gas outlets which had been built into the house. Nathaniel and the other Leverones chuckled, years afterward, when they recalled the frustrated handyman who fumed with wrath because the new fixtures wouldn't light his pipe. There was an Irishman who was out of step with the march of progress! Actually, the sputtering electric lights of that time did not provide efficient illumination and were inferior to the Welsbach gas burners—a membrane over a frame over the gas outlet—which had reached quite a stage of perfection.

The six Leverone children had their rooms on the third floor of the large house. The oldest son, Lawrence, was married shortly after the Keene home was purchased and moved into a house his father had built, but the other five young Leverones did much stomping up and down the back stairs before they went out into the world. Although the house had a handsome front stairway, the young people preferred the informality of the back one. They were allowed the freedom of the house, without hearing many complaints about occasional dirty boots or shoes.

The beautiful floors in the house are remembered with affectionate pride. The one in the library, patterned of various woods laid in squares, was kept polished to a "diamond luster" by a handyman who skated around it with socks over his shoes.

Nat Leverone remembers that library floor particularly, because it had only a few throw rugs on it. Its gleaming expanse, after it had been polished, was too much of a temptation for him on one occasion.

Grinning mischievously, he tossed the family cat on one of the rugs and laughed at its antics when it scrambled for a footing on the glassy surface of the floor.

The "living room," which had a fireplace, was the most popular room for the family. As was the custom at the time, the formal front parlor was used for entertaining guests.

The Leverone home was probably as modern as a home could be, for its time. It was equipped with central heat. Mr. Leverone bought a carload of hard coal in the spring and early fall to stoke the huge boiler that provided hot water heat in the radiators.

Summertime memories include the large garden which was planted near the brook running along the outside edge of the property. It was a charming and delightful place for the young Leverones to grow up.

After Lawrence left home, Nathaniel was the "middle-aged" child, with sister Mary and Louis preceding him in age, and sisters Louise and Edith being his juniors. Since there were only two and one-half years between them, Nat was closest to Louis—or he wanted to be—and it irked him when Louis persisted in treating him as his "kid" brother.

The Leverone family knew all the joys of abundance, without allowing it to stifle their spirits. Nathaniel and his sisters and brother did not sit around on cushions, waiting for their whims to be gratified. One sister, Louise, was even dreaming of becoming a doctor—a very unlikely ambition for a girl at that time. She had been going to Boston regularly, to be

treated for an ear infection which the doctors in Keene said they could not cure since it was an after-effect of a bout with scarlet fever. Her experience with the specialists in Boston had aroused Louise's interest in medicine.

Grief touched the Leverone family while Nathaniel was growing up. Perhaps his older sister, Mary, had been dreaming of unprecedented challenges when she went to Europe to study art. The family received word that she had contracted pneumonia, and Mary's mother was unable to reach the young girl's bedside before she died. It was not yet the age of airplanes and penicillin. The shadow of the tragedy lay heavily on the Leverone family for many years.

All the Leverones liked the good feeling of disciplining themselves and taking joy in it—of seeking out "obstacle courses" that they didn't find in the well-equipped Leverone home. The children could look to their parents for an example of rugged New England hardihood. Every day, winter and summer, Robert and Rose Leverone would take long walks. Being out of doors was a diversion to be anticipated with a glow of pleasure. A successful food merchant and builder of "a street of houses" in the days long before sub-divisions, Robert Leverone retired at the age of fifty to concern himself only with the supervision of his investments. There was an idealistic purpose back of Robert Leverone's plan to retire from a full-time business career early in life. "He and mother wanted to watch the sun set together," his children recall.

In the Leverone home there were gracious afternoons with cultured friends who discussed current

affairs, history and the arts, and their travels, with well-bred authority. The Leverone children grew up in an atmosphere of pleasant enlightenment, among gentlefolk who enjoyed the fine art of conversation.

With commendable gusto, there were occasions when the Leverone parents would often, in the dead of winter, plunge upward through snowdrifts to the windswept summer house at Beech Hill—which they loved equally well in winter. Laughing, their faces tingling from the raw cold and exertion, Robert and Rose Leverone would build a fire in the huge old kitchen range and make a pot of coffee to drink while they munched the food they had brought with them. Then they would tramp upward to the top of the hill, pausing for another cup of coffee on their way home. The house, its cupboards stocked with staple items, was dear to the hearts of the Leverones and their friends.

The lure of Beech Hill knew no special season for young Nat. The family attended the Congregational Church in Keene, and the children went to Sunday School classes there. Although Nathaniel looked like a cherub, with his curly hair and big brown eyes, "he was known on more than one occasion to slip off to Beech Hill rather than attend Sunday School as the warm breezes of spring brought the green to the countryside."

Young Nat Leverone was a "rough and tumble" mischief who plunged into rollicking outdoor activities without worrying about safeguarding his clothes or rumpling his hair. He ripped his trousers regularly on the helter-skelter rides down the hill on a traverse

sled. He had a sporting habit of trying to cross streams on birch logs pushed in from the banks—even though he occasionally didn't quite make it. Once in awhile, it is reported, "there were altercations with the rough and ready little Irish boys from the Catholic School—which left clothing in tatters when they started the arguments, and only in semi-tatters when Nat Leverone's group retaliated."

Nathaniel and his friends had a special annoyance in their young lives. It was a vending machine at Bullard and Shedds in Keene, one of the oldest drugstores in the United States. That chocolate machine was an interesting contraption but an irritating one, too. A penny was inserted, pushed in, and a piece of chocolate would be dropped out. That was the principle of the machine, but the boys lost more pennies that way! More times than not the coin was gratefully accepted, and the machine considered its mission completed.

Nat and his buddies, who were not about to sit back and take this insult, found that a properly formed piece of cardboard made a dandy substitute for the coin; and what is more, it just sat there in the indentation and could be used over and over again until the machine was empty. The boys did not feel that they were being dishonest—because they had been duped so many times by the contraption, and they took sweet revenge.

Except for being a championship walker and a good baseball player, Nat Leverone did not engage in formal sports programs. At one time, he made a stab at "the manly art of self-defense." The boys would feint some blows without trying to do anything spectacular

in the "Free and Easy" clubhouse located on the grounds of the Leverone property. Nat had two things in his favor when he boxed with a certain husky opponent. He was able to handle himself with skill, and his slender stature made his opponent look like "a big bully."

Hearing everyone cheering continuously for Nat, the other young man grew irked enough "to put the faint into the feint of his blow." The fight was getting fierce, with bloody noses and some bruises, when Father Leverone descended on the prize ring and forbade any more "spectator" matches. That parental decree took the ginger out of the sport, and the "friendly" boxing matches came to an end.

A jolly period of Nat Leverone's young life was dedicated to being a member of the "Free and Easy" Club, a very secret society. It wasn't his club. His brother Louis was the founder and guiding light of the organization which met in the clubhouse, or casino, on the Leverone grounds.

Because he was a member of the family, the big boys just about had to let "the little fellow" in, but Nat was readily accepted as a member of the group.

According to a report from highly secret sources, "The F & E Club was a secret society in the true tradition with a peephole opening cut in the door, and the password entry required. It is interesting to note that the Klondike gold rush was only recently over, and the question of the password was 'Klondike' and the proper answer for entry was 'Chilcoot.' A regular initiation ceremony was followed, one phase of which

was being dragged up and down through Beaver Brook, a boundary line on the Leverone property."

The Free and Easy Club building was heated by a huge old-fashioned stove. The boys cut the wood for it, and for the stove on Beech Hill. Cutting and hauling wood were jobs in which they would take vigorous pleasure. When there were dead trees to be felled and wood to chop, the boys took the initiative. Even today, Nathaniel Leverone enjoys being a "rail splitter" again when he goes back to Beech Hill.

Christmas was a traditional family ceremony, with the boys making a careful selection of a tree from the woods at Beech Hill, felling it, and hauling it down the hill on the traverse sled which was used for a variety of activities. They would also pick checkerberry, or wintergreen, to deck the Leverone halls for the holiday season.

The hills would have been wonderful for skiing if they hadn't been "too raw, with huge boulders spilling down them." Smashed skis were put aside in favor of the traverse sled which was quite dangerous too. There were moments of hair-raising suspense because the weight of the double-sectioned sled generated tremendous speeds, and the steering device was crude. On more occasions than Nat Leverone cares to remember, the zooming trip down the steep hills was brought to an abrupt end by a tree that wouldn't get out of the way.

Skating was a popular sport and Nat Leverone enjoyed it, although he didn't consider himself a particularly graceful skater. There are more important virtues than being graceful, he realized one day when

he was skating at nearby Swanzey Pond with some of his friends. At its exit, Swanzey Pond had a little waterfall which kept the ice paper thin or completely open, even in sub-zero weather.

In the party was a fellow who fancied he could cut quite a graceful figure on the ice, and he skated on one foot and then on the other with many handsome flourishes, gliding on and on until he glided gracefully into ten feet of water near the waterfall. His frozen body was soothed by the fire Nat built, but nothing could relieve his mortification when he saw the girls bursting into helpless laughter after he had tried so hard to impress them.

As a small boy, Nat Leverone felt shy when the widows and spinster ladies made a fuss over him. Later on, it took him awhile to get over feeling the same way about those people called "girls."

He went to dancing school, in the good tradition, and later attended high school and country club dances. He did not start to date girls very early, but enjoyed dancing with them. That was the era of the gliding waltzes, dance cards, the delicate scent of rose water, and sedate chaperones; and Nathaniel Leverone still mourns the passing of those charming customs and conventions. This state of mind can be reached after about ten minutes of watching aging mothers doing the "twist."

When Nat began to "call" on young ladies, he ran into a slight problem with his father who maintained that no honest man would be on the streets after nine p.m. Since visiting hours for proper young ladies usually lasted from seven to nine, this schedule or-

dinarily would work out nicely. It seemed, however, that the prettiest girls were just about as inaccessible as Rapunzel. They either lived at Bellows Falls which was about twenty-two miles away, or at Walpole which was seventeen miles away—or else they lived at the top of high hills.

If he wanted to get home from Walpole with the horse and buggy by nine o'clock, he would almost have to start back before he got there. As for driving up to visit the lovely young ladies who lived on those hills, everybody knows that a horse can make good time going uphill but it will lose its shoes if pushed on the way down. Nat could have made better time on foot, but horses and buggies were a status symbol in those days.

Even with all his good excuses for getting home after nine o'clock, Nat found the usually unlocked house tightly locked one night, probably because his father wanted to be certain, for once, just when he did get home. He was a persistent young man, though, and he didn't give up easily. He found one window of the basement unlocked—purely by accident, it is sincerely to be hoped—and carefully eased himself in. Everything was fine until he made contact with the soft muzzle of his friendly collie dog Ted, who insisted on whining a typical collie dog greeting. Fortunately, Ted was smart enough to keep his conversation down to a discreet whine. The next morning, Nathaniel's father happened to mention that the family could always feel safe with Ted in the house—perhaps.

When he was out later than "a decent young man should be," the tardy lad made it a point not to check

his watch. Then he could have a safe answer to his father's natural question, "By the way, Nat, what time did you get home last night?"

From all accounts, Nat Leverone was poised to take off with his friends for Beech Hill on the spur of any moment. During the cold months, when the mercury would plunge far below zero, getting water to make coffee would be an adventure in itself. Despairing of melting enough snow, some of the young men would scramble uphill to a well so deep that it never froze. After the pail was filled, the fun would begin. It was almost impossible to carry a sloshing pail of very wet water down a snowy hill, but the frigid air would help solve the problem. By the time the pail arrived at the Beech Hill house, what was left of the water would be frozen!

Sometimes Nat and his friends would put themselves to stern "endurance tests" in dead of winter and take pride in their resourcefulness. On one winter night, when an unplanned overnight stay was decided upon, they were not able to discover where the bedclothes had been stored. Old clothing and newspapers were piled on the beds in layers, with brown wrapping paper on top. They opened the windows to let some of the "warmer air" into the "ice-box bedrooms" which had been closed all winter. Even though the temperature went down to forty below that night, they said they slept in comfort.

It is almost impossible to sniff all the lush fragrance of Beech Hill in the summertime. The young Leverones enjoyed "milking" tree-high blueberry bushes of their magnificent, profuse fruit. Delectable wild ber-

ries were found in abundance in the Beech Hill area and could be enjoyed fresh from the bushes.

Nathaniel Leverone had a "green thumb" even as a young lad. He noticed plants and flowers, and they fascinated him. When he saw wild plants that he wanted to transfer to his own garden at Beech Hill, he would spade down below the roots and transfer the entire ball of earth. Successful with flowers and shrubs that veteran gardeners had considered non-transplantable, he recalls many varieties of wild orchids, lady slippers, pink azalea, and arbutus which flourished after replanting.

Because he grew up being a lover and student of the out-of-doors, Nat Leverone became a completely reliable authority on all forms of edible mushrooms. He must have been, because everyone stayed healthy! The mushrooms were gathered on Beech Hill and dried on giant screen racks for winter storage. Nathaniel Leverone has not forgotten "the magnificent scent of the mushrooms as they dried in the sun."

Nat loved to get out and walk, and nothing in nature escaped his appreciative, curious eyes. Early in life, he realized that the study of the great outdoors is everlastingly exciting, with new miracles beyond each tree trunk and over each hill. His devotion to walking and exploring led him and some of his friends to make a thrilling discovery.

Many years before Nat was born, a complete granite quarry had been erected in the mountains near Roxbury. When the granite was found to be the type that developed brown discolorations when it was exposed to weather, the quarry was abandoned. One day,

when Nat and his friends were walking over the Marlboro trestle which bridged a deep crevasse filled with majestic pines dwarfed far below, they heard an oncoming train and stepped off the trestle to one of the small platforms provided for the purpose. Since they were almost across the trestle, they stepped off to almost level ground. As they did so, they saw what appeared to be the faint traces of an old railroad bed. Following the dim traces of the bed, they came upon the abandoned buildings and rusted machinery in that mountain "wilderness" spot! Stumbling onto their own personal "ghost town" was as good as a Frank Merriwell adventure.

The greatest cause for jubilation was the crystal clear pond at the quarry, their private, icy, spring-fed pool, isolated from the rest of the world. It became a treasured retreat. During his college years and even after he left New Hampshire, Nat would return to Roxbury pool with friends. Some memories of youth might diminish and dim with the years, but Nat Leverone knew that the Roxbury pool would continue to be an idyllic reality. Supplies and utensils that would not corrode were hidden in niches in the rocks to be used when needed.

The Roxbury pool was not neglected in the winter either; and after hearing about some of Nat Leverone's outdoor exploits, it's a wonder he didn't form a chapter of the Polar Bear Club there. He came close to it, on one New Year's Eve that he recalled in detail, in a 1960 letter to one of his friends:

> "I thought about you this morning when our doorman said that the temperature was ten above

zero. Actually it felt much colder than it did the night when you, Bob Conant, Sam Baxter and I headed for that little pool in the hills near Roxbury on New Year's Eve.

"You will recall that when we left my house the temperature was thirty-eight below zero and it hit forty-eight before we returned home at two o'clock in the morning. That night, as usual, we wore only shoes, even though the snow was nearly two feet deep, and we wore no overcoats. We had a terrific time trying to chop through the ice in order to get water for coffee.

"What a wonderful time we had, and how much better it was celebrating the New Year in the wilds where there were no sounds except those made by the marvelous music of that little waterfall over the face of that granite cliff on the side of the pool.

"I remember when we arrived that my hands were so darn cold that I couldn't hold on to the handle of the hatchet, so I had to open my shirt and hold my hands against my chest until they got thawed out. After that with the assistance of the crowd, I was able to get down an old pine, and then we had a fire that lighted the surrounding pine woods for a long distance away. How beautiful they looked with the orange light from the fire reflecting through those enormous pines covered with snow!

"I wonder if anyone has ever discovered our place at Roxbury. Howard Warren also asked about it when he was in Chicago a couple of years

ago. He said the finest time of his life was the day when we crossed the old Marlboro trestle with Ted, my collie dog. Even the dog was dizzy when he looked down through the ties and saw those enormous pines way down below us."

The delicate old trestle has been removed. Unless someone has put up a bridge to replace it, the Roxbury pool—with dishes and supplies secreted in the rocks —must be keeping its silent vigil, waiting for the sound of eager voices and healthy laughter, and eyes that look with wonder at orange firelight reflected through snow-mantled pines in the steel-blue grandeur of a New Hampshire winter's night.

Chapter Two

A Great Young Life

In school, Nat Leverone was such a bright student that he was able to skip two grades, mainly because he was able to remember facts so well. He was one of those grammar school students who could glance quickly at the day's assignment and retain all of the pertinent points. His teachers commented on his remarkable memory.

Nat was an avid reader outside of school, concentrating much of his attention on the adventures of good old Frank Merriwell at Yale. Whenever he thought of college, he had a mental picture of himself at Old Eli. With a fine library in their home, there were many other books in his life, and he has said that he got more out of them than he did from his formal schooling. He followed his brother Lawrence's example in developing a taste for good literature—he had thoroughly enjoyed Victor Hugo at the age of ten. His knowledge of the classics was later to be of inestimable help to him in college.

Equipped with his natural talent for getting the main points—the meat—out of all he read, heard or

saw, he had the further unusual facility of immediately recalling any fact from his efficient "mental filing cabinet." Nathaniel Leverone would have done well on any modern quiz program, without the benefit of "backstage coaching," and proved the point in later years when he was a guest on "Quiz Kids." It was said that he could handle the English language with such dexterity that "he could use ridicule in a way that did not offend."

The memory wizard also showed a fine talent for chemistry while he was in high school. A putrid odor arose from the inkwells in the study hall one day, after he had given them his special treatment. After it was possible to use the room again, the principal marched into the study hall and strode straight to Nat's desk.

Nat knew that a "stool pigeon" had been at work when the principal asked, "Young man, were you responsible for what happened to the inkwells?"

"Do you think I would do a thing like that, sir?" The resourceful teen-ager thought of several ways to avoid an outright "yes" or "no" until the principal gave him those two choices. Rather than lie, he admitted his folly and marched off to the principal's office with him. The man was a very understanding educator, Nat recalls with a fond smile. The principal was not very severe with the "culprit" because he had confessed his guilt; he seemed more disapproving of the boy who had tattled on him.

After Nat learned the name of the "stool pigeon," he made a special trip to the front of the study hall for one of those large quart bottles of glue that used

to be standard equipment in schoolrooms. On the way back to his seat with it, he stumbled and the glass bottle of glue crashed down and broke on the desk of the "informer," drenching him liberally with the sticky, gooey mess.

There is a glint of fond recollection in Nat Leverone's eyes, as he remembers that incident. "You know, you can trip yourself by putting one foot in front of the other just right, and it looks as though it's completely accidental."

At the turn of the new century, high school graduation routines were about the same as they are now, except that the Senior Prom was called the Senior Ball. Versatile Nat Leverone even had some postgraduate "fun" when he doctored up the advertisements for the Senior Play programs of several classes following his own. Most alarming was the one for the Keene butcher, whom he identified as the "Local Dealer in Dead Horses." Since all of the horrified merchants suffered a common fate, they managed to laugh it off, but, "They agreed that it was so apparent that Nathaniel Leverone was the culprit that he might just as well have worn a placard attesting to his guilt." The fact that the merchants liked young Nat gave them even greater tolerance.

A handsome young senior on his high school graduation picture, Nat's hair was parted in the middle with rich clusters of ringlets tumbling over his temples. There is a deceptively dreamy look in his eyes. In a high white collar with a white silk bow tie, he has the air of a young gentleman of distinction.

A student who was active in everything from

scholarship to skullduggery, Nat cherished the memories and friendships of his high school days, returning to Keene for many of the annual reunions. He was elected president of his alumni class.

Before he left for college, Nathaniel's father spoke earnestly to him. He said, "You go to college to get an education, but education doesn't all come from books; much of it comes from people. Be active, really know people, and don't spend all your time with your books."

Even though he had looked longingly toward Yale through his grammar school years, Nat Leverone had developed an interest in Dartmouth after his brother Louis was enrolled there. He and Louis shared a suite, and both were destined to be graduates of the school in Hanover, New Hampshire.

The recent Keene graduate had discovered that he did not have proper entrance credits in Latin, Greek or advanced mathematics to make him eligible for enrollment at Yale and some of the other colleges. He had the minimum requirements for the Dartmouth "Scientific Course" except for mathematics, but the principal and most of the teachers at Keene certified him anyway.

There was a slight case of "monkeyshines" with his French teacher that later caused a furor about sixty-seven miles north, at Dartmouth College. The French teacher would not certify Nat, so he was required to take a college entrance test in French. He ended up in the "A" category class and kept moving along at the same top level pace. Before Thanksgiving recess, division exams were given for the purpose of

dividing freshmen into "A" (superior), "B" (average), or "C" (marginal) classes. The "uncertified" French student, Nat, qualified for the "A" category. The other five "certified" Keene students tested to the "C" category, and all eventually failed their French courses.

The Dartmouth Chairman of Admissions—affectionately described as "a frozen face bird"—decided that there had been something amiss in the French Department at Keene High School. The President, the Dean, and the Admissions Chairman all questioned the lone "A" student in an effort to find out why he —who had not been certified—had turned out to be such an excellent scholar in the French classes. For many years, Keene High School was not allowed certification privileges, and prospective Dartmouth students were required to take entrance examinations in every subject.

French was easy for Nat. He liked it, and he made use of it in his later life. At the end of his freshman year at Dartmouth, he just happened to have a finger in the writing of the class will for the following graduating class at Keene High. Among his bright contributions was one bequeathing a French dictionary to the French teacher who had refused to certify him in that subject at Dartmouth.

Knowing his record, it is possible to picture handsome young Nathaniel Leverone, with his curly head bowed over his books—an excellent student who made Phi Beta Kappa, a Rufus Choate scholar, an honors graduate with the Dartmouth class of 1906. His

achievements were unique indeed—considering that he held the absentee record of the school!

His head wasn't always bowed over his books either. Once it was dangling downward in a terrifying fashion. "I will never forget the night you held me by the feet and lowered me out of the third story window so I could use the broom handle to break out the windows, at midnight, in the rooms of some of our soundly sleeping friends," he blithely recalls in a letter to an old classmate.

Nat Leverone was mischievous to begin with, always enjoying a bit of fun. His resentment at rigorous hazing by upperclassmen inspired some elaborate hijinks during his freshman year at Dartmouth.

There was the time that his brother Louis had brought his canoe to college during Spring recess, intending to paddle it home at the end of the term, and the brothers had brought it up to their room to repaint it. The floor had been carefully protected by straw matting. When Nat looked at that matting and the paint brushes soaking in cans of kerosene, he kept thinking about an upperclassman, on the floor below, who had been particularly demanding of the services of poor downtrodden freshmen.

Nat measured the distance to the tyrant's window. Then he and some other freshmen conspirators rolled up the straw matting, placed it on a pad of newspapers and dribbled kerosene on it. Pushing a wide board out of the window to provide leverage, the mat was fastened to a wire on a pole. Then the mat was set afire and lowered to the windows of the offending upper-

classman, who later became a famous judge. The natural result was blown-out windows and pandemonium, but the perpetrators of the foul deed got rid of the evidence by dropping the pole and board out of the window.

Then there were those large granite slabs, weighing several hundred pounds, that were used to prevent erosion when the eaves dripped. Freshman Leverone thought of them in terms of a greater destiny. He and some of his classmates hauled several through the window of the dorm, placed them tenderly on the mattresses of some of the most objectionable upperclassmen, and then did a beautiful job of remaking the beds. At least one upperclassman did not appreciate the "firmness" of his mattress when he plopped himself down hard on it.

As an upperclassman, "the Nat Leverone touch" became more sophisticated, causing more people to go tearing madly around in circles as his plots reached a grand climax. Of special note was the time when a fresh Spanish-American War Colonel came to Dartmouth to visit his nephew. A pompous braggart, he didn't exactly claim to have led the charge up San Juan Hill, but he gave the impression that he told Teddy Roosevelt how to do it. When the visitor kept being more arrogantly obnoxious by the minute, Nat Leverone happened to remember that he had some giant firecrackers on hand, naturally.

It was a well-known fact around the dorms that entry could be gained into almost any room by kicking the lock area sharply. Using the time-honored approach, Leverone and some of his friends "invaded"

the room directly above the one in which the "hero" was sitting on a couch by the open window, recounting his daring deeds.

Employing the pole trick again, two lighted cannon crackers with long wicks were lowered on fine twine to a crucial point near the ear of the visitor who had won the Spanish-American War. The blast, which blew all the windows in, sent Nat Leverone and his accomplices tearing across to their own dormitory "while bedlam prevailed as the war hero screamed that some dastardly plot was afoot to kill him, 'Just because I am a patriot!' " The local police and fire departments were summoned and it was seriously believed that some hot-blooded Spaniard was lurking about trying to do away with the visiting dignitary.

There are "lavender and old lace memories" of the Keene community of Nat Lerevone's young life—of "rather strong lines of class distinction in the area, with the mothers of the fine old families being very particular about the young men who called on their daughters." That was one reason why so many of them drifted into spinsterhood when the eligible college men left the area to seek greater business opportunities elsewhere. There were always more lovely young ladies than gallant young bachelors around Keene, so Nat Leverone brought some of his friends from Dartmouth to enjoy their company.

Gentle decorum was not always the rule. On at least one occasion, there were rough and tumble antics when two of the gay blades took their charming young ladies to the County Fair. No proper college man would be caught out in public, in those days, un-

less he was nattily attired in white trousers and a blue coat. Nat tried his skill on a huge slide that "challenged the daring young hero to land on his feet with a victorious bounce," and he did it with a splendid flourish. After mixing fine black dirt with the sawdust provided at the foot of the slide, he called to his chum that all was clear for his own spectacular descent.

Much to the amusement of the young ladies, the other young man came scooting down and landed on his feet with a healthy plop, filling his pure white trousers from ankles to waist with soft black dirt. In "college boy-ese" of Dartmouth '06, he must have said reproachfully, "What a scurvy trick, Nat—you'll rue this day!"

Walking continued to be one of Nat Leverone's favorite pastimes all through high school and college. He says that he wore thick-soled shoes and did not suffer from foot trouble. While he was a Dartmouth student, he walked "tremendous distances," casually and with a free-swinging stride. Some of his most enduring friendships were founded on a common devotion to the great outdoors. A choice "stroll" took him and some of his Dartmouth friends on a long, triangular jaunt across the border into Vermont. Later he referred to "the trips we took so often. Remember how we used to go down the hill to the track at Norwich, Vermont, then go south to White River Junction where we would leave the tracks and go through West Lebanon to Lebanon, and then straighten off to Hanover?"

On one of their hikes, when the snow was so deep that they had to walk in wagon-track ruts, the students

were overtaken by a horse-drawn hearse which happened to be unoccupied at the time. Seeing the boys standing in the deep snow at the edge of the road to let him pass by, the driver told the young men to hop into the back. To a young man who even today avoids shaking hands with an undertaker, the gracious invitation was not appealing—he declined. He did, however, enjoy a mental picture of the gruesome scene as the hearse would arrive at Dartmouth right at supper time, while students were swarming the walks, and disgorge its load of foolishly grinning passengers.

Nat Leverone's great physical diversion, walking, kept him covering the countryside on foot. He usually walked at a pace of five miles an hour and thought nothing of traveling forty-six miles in a day. They often used to walk to Windsor, have supper, and walk back to Hanover, a distance of forty-two miles.

While he was at Dartmouth, he and several friends covered themselves with glory by setting out on a record walk of sixty-eight miles on the railroad tracks. Arms swinging vigorously, they matched their heel-and-toe rhythm to the spacing of the wooden ties. On that occasion, they kept their regular pace in spite of a slight handicap—half snow and rain. Nat Leverone wore the backs of his shoes off on that walk. Two freight trains, piloted by kindly engineers who assumed they were college boys who couldn't afford to ride the passenger train, halted to offer them a ride. A Boston newspaperman joined them at Bellows Falls for a "walking interview," and their amazing marathon walk was reported in the next issue of the paper. Even though she was highly in favor of outdoor exer-

cise, Nat Leverone's mother would grow anxious about him on those very ambitious hikes.

With his ability as a baseball player and all the walking that kept him in top condition, Nat would have been a "natural" for the track team. Here he revealed a lusty talent for rebellion against "group participation!" He says frankly, "I wouldn't go out for the track team because I just didn't like training."

Nat Leverone did not affect the manner of a prospective honors candidate in college. He and a friend used to be subjected to "breakfast lectures" from a dedicated bookworm at their fraternity table on mornings when exams were scheduled. The "scholar" would predict a grade of 95 for himself. He would patronize his two classmates and tell them that they could become honors students if they would apply themselves as he did. Pretending anxiety, Leverone and his buddy would chuckle inwardly, for inevitably they got grades in the 90's—while poor Mr. Bookworm's grade would be in the 50's.

Nat Leverone was an active member of the Class of 1906 at Dartmouth, as well as a loyal and spirited Phi Gamma Delta fraternity brother. He was president of the alumni class of 1906 for many years. Looking back, he recalls that he had not pointed his college education in any special direction, just as he had not planned his high school curriculum very carefully. It was different then, with no college entrance examiners breathing down the necks of high school freshmen—for better or for worse.

Nearing graduation from Dartmouth, Nat had idyllic visions of "going up to Beech Hill for several

months, and just enjoying the leisure and beauty of the countryside," perhaps like Thoreau at Walden Pond.

On second thought, he decided that the idea lacked elements of self-discipline, and it would be unfair to other young men who had hoped to go to college and did not have his advantages. Others had followed exactly in the footsteps of their fathers as farmers or tradesmen—occupations at which their fathers had succeeded without college educations. There were college graduates who did nothing but "live off of someone else," and Nat Leverone certainly did not want to put himself in that category. He didn't know quite what he wanted to do with his life, and he had a normal number of misgivings—but he knew perfectly well he would do SOMETHING!

Chapter Three

Points West

When Nathaniel Leverone went to Chicago he had a letter of introduction to John G. Shedd from Wallace Mason of Keene. He recalls Mr. Shedd's kindness to a slightly homesick young man. "Gosh, it wasn't money or anything like that that Mr. Shedd gave me; it was a sharing of himself. I was shy, and he put me at ease. I was lonesome, and he took me into his luxurious home. It was a universal hand of fellowship and comradeship that he held out to me."

The young Dartmouth graduate had a wonderful visit with Mr. Shedd, and when he was leaving, Mr. Shedd told him, "You don't know what this has meant to me. I used to be like you. I believed in people. I had the same fine high ideals. Don't ever be skeptical of people. Don't be like me. I am old and cynical, and the result is that I am a lonely old man. That is what happens to too many men. It is better to be taken in than to be suspicious of everybody."

The New Englander was reminded of the motto his parents had given to him, just before he left for Chi-

cago. His mother had said with gentle conviction, "Your father and I want you to be a good citizen. We've been good citizens and our people ahead of us were. Well, we finally decided we wouldn't give you any advice—we'd give you this motto." The motto expressed the philosophy of an old Quaker who had lived in Benjamin Franklin's time. It said, with typical Quaker sensitivity:

> "I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good thing that I may do, or any kindness I may show to my fellow man, let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

That motto, on his desk, would be of vital importance to Nathaniel Leverone throughout his life. It represented the ideal most worthy of attainment.

The young Dartmouth man was first employed by the Page Belting Company of Concord and was sent as an assistant manager to their Chicago branch. The field of activity was not exactly geared to the dynamic forward march of progress. The company employed only two city salesmen who rarely made more than one sale a month, because their product was not properly advertised, their prices were not competitive, and livelier local concerns had successfully competed for the limited amount of business for many years.

Nat Leverone asked for an opportunity to get out and sell. He had decided that he would leave and return to the East if he made no headway as a salesman.

The energetic young man was sent to call on a prospect who had consistently placed his orders with one of Page's competitors, the latest one very recently.

Greeting him courteously, the man said, "You should have come in an hour ago, and you might have had this business." He showed Nat the order he had just given to a local competitor.

When the Page Belting Company salesman sat down to talk for a few minutes, his coat swung open, and the man behind the desk happened to glimpse the Phi Beta Kappa key on his watch fob. He asked Nat Leverone where he had received it, and when he said Dartmouth they were "off to the races," since he had found a fellow Dartmouth alumnus.

The man cancelled the first order and gave it to the New England Yankee who had barely started selling for Page Belting Company. He had set a remarkable record by getting an order on his first day, and he amazed the Page people by repeating the feat on three successive days.

The head of the Chicago office, sensing that the new salesman could handle a position with wider range and more stimulating prospects, suggested that he return to the home office since there was a good possibility of a worthwhile opening in Philadelphia.

The thought of returning East delighted Nathaniel Leverone. He went to Beech Hill for several weeks while he waited to hear from Philadelphia.

When the Page opening went to another chap, Nat Leverone got himself a job with the Bates Machine Company. (This was not the present Bates Numbering Machine Company.) He was a successful Bates salesman, and they shifted his territory to bring him through Ohio, including Columbus.

Salesman Leverone was one of the pioneers on the road, logging tremendous mileage in his motorcar. That was the era when most roads were "dirt-surfaced" glorified cow paths. Still vivid in his memory are the pitiful and inefficient service stations he visited from Chicago to the east coast. He says that he has made at least one stop for repairs in every garage from Chicago to Buffalo, and his Down East respect for cleanliness was constantly offended by the sight of grease and oil-begrimed mechanics who casually lubricated the outside of his cars with their slithery smears. Later on, he became more than casually interested in setting up thoroughly modern service stations. He had extensive real estate holdings in Chicago, including three corners which he contemplated developing into true service stations. Although he visualized a slanting ramp into a pit area for servicing, it was not far removed from the present form of grease and oil pits. This was a natural interest for Nathaniel Leverone because of his involvement with the auto accessories business when it was a struggling infant. From the time he first started to use service stations, he began to form his own opinions on the way they should be run. He even went so far as to investigate the possibility of getting tires and accessories for distribution through the stations, when a different field of endeavor claimed his attention.

In his early travels around the territory, Nat began to run into some strange coincidences. On his calls, he was repeatedly asked whether they were having a "convention of Bates salesmen," since one had called the prior day. Nat Leverone later discovered that he

had been tested, and he had come through with flying colors. He had received orders from seven clients who had turned down the earlier Bates salesman. He replaced that man, who then happened to be the midwest sales manager. He almost refused because he was reluctant to return to Chicago.

Thinking it over, the New England Yankee decided to return to the Windy City, even though the prospect was not very inspiring at that time. He believed that being unemployed was a handicap to an applicant seeking a better position, so he determined to do a first rate job in Chicago for awhile. Armed with this "powerful ammunition," he would return to the East and get himself a choice job in the area he preferred.

He closed his comment on this phase of his life with, "But here I am, still in Chicago." (And still doing much more than a first rate job, according to Chicago!)

Covering his western territory in 1910, Nat Leverone was in San Francisco when the Jeffries-Johnson controversy was making boxing history. He had a letter of introduction to Mr. Hatch, a former Keene resident and friend of Nat's father.

When he called Mr. Hatch, the gentleman was delighted to hear from young Nat and urged him to join him for lunch. Mr. Hatch was having his friend, the governor of California, as his personal guest and thought that the former New England young man would enjoy meeting him. Nathaniel did get on splendidly with the governor who kept making him repeat many of the things he said because he was delighted with his strong New England accent. During the lunch-

eon it was acknowledged that the governor was scheduled for a press conference afterward. Later it became clear that he had come to San Francisco to cancel the Johnson-Jeffries fight there. He was among the people who disapproved of the bloody spectacles that the fights had often turned out to be in those days, with gore-crazed spectators shrieking, "Kill him!" while they were practically seeing murder committed. The fight was staged in Goldfield, Nevada, instead. Jeffries, who was trying to make a comeback, lasted for fifteen rounds before he was knocked out.

After that memorable luncheon in San Francisco, the governor strolled out with Nathaniel and asked him what he was planning to visit in the city. He was surprised to hear that Nat's immediate choice was the infamous Barbary Coast. In spite of the governor's efforts to discourage him, the visitor toured the derelict community, walking about and taking pictures with a concealed camera.

He was attracted to a mission that had formerly been a dance hall. The building made an emphatic impression because it was plastered with signs inviting, "Get Right with God," "Repent Now," and "Sinner, Come Home." Going over to the mission, Leverone remarked that "the old boy" had some great signs worked up. An old gentleman standing nearby laughed and announced that he was the "old boy." Nat recalls that he was very friendly and invited him to come back to the mission any time he wished to do so. "This was unusual since no one who did not appear to be destitute was very welcome."

Nat Leverone's permanent address seemed des-

tined to be Chicago. The former New England Yankee saw a better opportunity and went to work for the Hill Pump Valve Company, gravitating toward it because his brother Louis was associated with a similar business.

During his early years in Chicago, Nat Leverone lived on the north side, on Argyle near the lake. At that time it was considered a choice area, with many beautiful homes on Sheridan Road. Young Mr. Leverone took an immediate interest in Lake Michigan. When he first arrived in Chicago, he swam with his roommate from Ainslie to Wilson Avenue and back without stopping. He modestly insists that he was not a "fancy" swimmer, just a steady swimmer with good stamina. He often swam with friends from Argyle to Montrose and farther south, in those days when the lake was much cleaner.

He had one "stimulating" swim in Lake Michigan on a dare, the day after Thanksgiving when it was snowing and the water was quite icy. "Your body glows, and you are not aware of the cold," he says.

His interest in Chicago deepened as he came to know the city. To Nat Leverone, the "lure" of the great city meant walking everywhere, becoming familiar with each street and section. All day Saturday and all day Sunday, he and his roommate "systematically" covered practically every street on the west and east, and the north and south sides of the city, walking ten or twenty miles during an ordinary jaunt. They roamed through good neighborhoods and poor, and in and out of alleys and lanes.

Dropping in at the Pacific Garden Mission, they

felt the dramatic impact of the appeal to save souls. "They lower the lights and play 'Where is My Wandering Boy Tonight?' and there is scarcely a dry eye in the place. Then they make a strong plea for the men to hit the sawdust trail to salvation."

The "exile" from New England was especially interested in one "disreputable-looking bum" who testified. He said he was a Yale graduate, and that the drinking habit had seized him while he was still in college. He spoke of his father, describing him as a prominent Cincinnati businessman who had struggled to help him return to a life of decency. That night at the Mission, the man said, "I think with the help of God I can make it."

It was just as well that Nat Leverone and his friend Sam Baxter happened to return to the Mission the following June, because that stranger's miserable plight had bothered them. During the later visit, a well-dressed man got up and "testified," "I don't know if anyone would know me, but I came here six months ago, and I am the happiest man in the United States, if not the world, today. I have learned the trade of tuning organs, and I have saved enough money to go back to my class reunion at Yale." He continued with great pride, "I can hold my head up, and stand and face my old classmates for the first time."

Nathaniel Leverone said the change in the man was remarkable. The young Dartmouth graduate was developing a deep sympathetic interest in people whom he could easily have ignored.

He was still traveling quite often, still getting out into the wide open spaces on business trips and vaca-

tions. In the West, he climbed mountains and covered enormous stretches of landscape on foot.

When George Mallory was asked why anyone would want to climb Mount Everest, he said, "Because it's there." Nat Leverone felt the same way about every tract of God's great real estate on earth. Trails, roads, trackless wastelands, tall hills, swamps, and mountains —all these would add to the mental and physical stature of a man who was determined to make them a part of his lifetime experience. Idealism aside, it was often great sport.

When he was spending the winter at the Camelback Inn near Phoenix, he would stretch his legs on a "short jaunt" to Scottsdale every day. At that time, Scottsdale was just a general store set in the arid desert wasteland. Starting early in the morning, the avid walker would circle toward the store, soaking up the sun and what scenery there was. It wasn't very exciting, but a man with a natural sense of curiosity could find diversions even in the dry desert.

Prophets of doom and well-wishers had warned him about the presence of rattlesnakes and spiders in the desert area and had urged him not to take those daily walks. He said that he had never encountered any form of life that had threatened to harm him there, nor had he ever, in all the situations in which he had become involved, met with belligerence. Since he made no move to harm any creature he came upon, it extended the same courtesy to him! This casual friendliness toward wildlife is a worthy character trait; animals often are sensitive to human antagonism and

distrust, and they will retaliate. Anticipation of trouble, on almost any level, seems to encourage it.

The people at the general store in Scottsdale were almost as reticent as some New Englanders, but they were beginning to wonder about that fellow who came striding out of the desert every day like an early Gary Cooper, quenched his thirst with a quart bottle of root beer, and then disappeared into the sun-baked wasteland again. They couldn't decide whether he matched the landscape. Finally an old Indian asked the stranger, "How come you come here?"

Everyone at the store was startled to hear that he made the fifteen-mile round-trip trek all the way from Camelback every day. He became the curiosity of the place. The desert hike was not especially jolly and the root beer was not that good either, but Leverone just had to walk somewhere.

During an automotive meeting at Colorado Springs, he had gone on a much more picturesque walking tour with a man named Johnson. As the two men had followed an old railroad trail up the mountain, Nat Leverone was reminded of a railroad bed of his youth that had led to Roxbury quarry and the crystal pool. Now he and Johnson were climbing upward past deserted railroad stations, coming at last to the abandoned village of Cripple Creek where rats made the only sound, scampering along bone-dry streets, over rotting boardwalks, and in and out of dusty buildings.

As they stood imagining how Cripple Creek must have looked when men and women were going about their business there, and children were skipping around the now-desolate street, Leverone and John-

son realized that dusk was coming too fast for comfort. The footing on the way up, along the old railroad trail, had been treacherous. The same route, in the darkness, would be impossible.

Starting down the side of the mountain to find another path, the men were able to guide themselves by occasional glimpses of automobile headlights on the highway far below. Back at the Broadmoor, where they were staying, they felt ready to eat everything in sight. The hotel at Cripple Creek had served its last meal in the distant days of yore, and the latter-day explorers had not eaten since breakfast.

While Nat Leverone was patrolling the desert out of Camelback, he would become terrifically annoyed if a car passed him—raising a great stationary cloud of dust—when he was near the road. Those dust clouds had personalities of their own; they would just sit there "like huge brown shelves," refusing to dissipate in the motionless air. One day, a car added insult to injury—it backed up. The driver was Leverone's old hiking buddy from Colorado Springs.

"Well, Nat, I was sure it was you!" Johnson greeted him jovially, stirring up a third dust cloud as he went merrily on his way, leaving Leverone chewing a mouthful of grit.

The least Johnson could have done, Leverone told himself indignantly, would have been to get out and walk to Scottsdale with him!

The Hill Pump Valve Company, of which he was now secretary and general manager, was moving along at a promising rate, and Nathaniel Leverone was al-

ready developing a legendary reputation as a speaker —"a man who did things to the English language that made ordinary mortals sound futile and dumb."

Leverone discovered, at a 1910 convention of the Automotive Manufacturing Association, that a man who gets to his feet in a meeting will have a dickens of a time trying to relax in his chair again. It started innocently enough. "A motion was put on the floor. I got up to speak and clarify my thinking on the proposition. Twenty minutes later I was elected president." The news of his ability as a speaker got around. Mr. Leverone has been standing in front of audiences, a good share of his time, ever since; and he tries to chuckle good-naturedly at the "vicious circle" which has involved him in so many time-consuming activities.

The Chicago Automotive Manufacturing Association—and later the national group—knew when they heard a good thing. Some of his introductions of supposedly distinguished speakers at Interfraternity Club, Hill Pump Valve Company, and Automotive Association meetings, back in the World War I days, are so riotously funny that it's a wonder the speakers could rise to the occasion after he had finished working them over. With masterful exaggeration, he would douse them liberally with the snake oil of his flowery wit.

There was that introduction for Gene Heller: "It isn't everyone who knows how to smile, but Mr. Heller here does—he has a smile like the California sunshine. If I had a smile like that I would not have to work for a living. When I try to smile I look like a sea-sick codfish. They tell me that down on the south side where

he (Mr. Heller) lives that when he passes, the babies stop crying, that the trees bend their branches way to the ground and that even occasionally a church steeple will fall off, in trying to do him homage . . ."

Probably no one would have been too prominent to escape the Leverone talent for brash whimsey. In his introduction of Archbishop Von Danagher, it is difficult to tell whether the guest was a member of the Catholic hierarchy or one of the boys casting parts for the Liberty Airplane motor down in the foundry at the Hill Pump Valve Company. Leverone must have licked his chops as he gazed over the faces before him that night and began:

"It's a most distinguished and unusual audience we have here tonight. I doubt if ever such a one has been gathered together before outside of the four walls of a state's prison and without the aid of a dozen deputy sheriffs. Pedestrians must feel pretty safe on the streets tonight with all of us locked up here in this room. I predict there will be no murders and robberies during the time our dinner is taking place. Yes, it is an unusual gathering. We have present, members of every race—including the human race, representatives of every profession—bankers like Mr. Clegg and horse thieves—screw machine operators and ambulance chasers — members of every religion — Holy Jumpers and second operation men, Mormons and second story workers. This is my idea of a representative Chicago audience."

Leverone got around to His Excellency after awhile. "I well remember when John Danagher—now Archbishop Von Danagher—first came to us from

Ireland. He had just driven the snakes out of there and told us he was going to do the same thing for the Hill Pump Valve Company. . . . John didn't come over on the Mayflower—it was the Cauliflower, but Ireland did a great day's work when she sent John to us. . . . John once nearly caused me to lose my life. That was at our picnic when I, in a burst of emotion, unthinkingly told you how John said, that the only thing lacking to make our picnic a success was that he had not seen Miss Leve with a good bun on. . . . He came to me today and asked me please not to refer to that incident again, as he did not mean it. He did say, however: 'Be Jasus, I would like to see her have a domned good bun on just the same.' . . . John has other things I am sure he could tell you about himself, and I will therefore ask him to swallow his pride and a couple of false teeth and give you the story of his life."

Actually, "Archbishop" Von Danagher DID work in the foundry, Mr. Leverone says. "He had such a delightful Irish brogue, and a wonderful measure of the fine Irish gift of gab, and he was asked to speak at the dinner because he was very much enjoyed both for his skill, and for his choice brogue."

"In fact," Mr. Leverone recalls, "shortly after the 'Archbishop' arrived in Chicago, he happened in on a large meeting of his countrymen, spoke so vehemently (and said just what they wanted to hear about the terrible experiences he had only recently endured in Ireland because of the oppression of the English—all of which was a figment of his imagination) that they promptly elected him president!"

The "Archbishop" even charmed Governor Dunne of Illinois. Numbered among Nat Leverone's good friends was Judge Robert Jerome Dunne of the Chicago Probate Court, one of the sons of the Dunne family. The governor was so enchanted with the "Archbishop's" magnificent brogue that Nathaniel Leverone took him to dinner at the Dunne home on several occasions.

Among Leverone's Hill Pump Valve Company orations is the "rouser" that he presented on the opening day of the Fourth Liberty Loan Drive during World War I. It was the type of patriotic speech that is calculated to make every citizen strain harder to do his duty to his country so "we will be able to hold our heads higher and look every man straight in the eye and tell him to go to hell!"

Among the transcripts of those early "speaker-introductions" is a curious document entitled DYING STATEMENT OF ..... SENT TO MR. LEVERONE, September 28, 1918. It commences: "Knowing that I have but a short time to live, I wish before I die to expose the spies—German spies and Mince pies—which infest the Hill Pump Valve Company." This impressive document is a parody depicting the "nefarious activities" of certain "sinister personalities" inside the Hill Pump Valve Company. No matter how it is labeled, Nathaniel Leverone's literary style is unmistakable.

Early in the 1920's, a number of prominent automobile manufacturers realized that there were mighty respectable profits to be reaped in the automobile accessories field. Claxton, whose raucous automobile

horn used to panic farm animals and cause farmers to brandish their fists in rage, was among the first to sell out to the "big boys." The Hill Pump Valve Company went along with the tide.

Nat Leverone retired gracefully from the automobile accessories business. He had been investing his profits in Chicago real estate with highly successful results. Until 1929, he spent most of his time being president of the Nathaniel Leverone Company, specializing in real estate investments.

On June 25, 1925, prominent Chicago businessman Nathaniel Leverone was married to Martha Ericsson, daughter of Lena Johnson Ericsson and Henry Ericsson. There were three sons and four daughters in the Ericsson family. Martha Ericsson Leverone is a graduate of St. Mary's Episcopal School of Galesburg, Illinois.

Mrs. Leverone's father was a noted builder "who made his mark on the Chicago skyline." The Pittsfield Building, Continental Illinois Bank Building, Hibbard, Spencer and Bartlett Building and the Chicago Motor Club are but a few examples of his handiwork. That his adopted city appreciated Mr. Ericsson's knowledge and perspicuity was acknowledged by the fact that Mayor Carter Harrison, Jr. appointed him as Building Commissioner in 1911, a post which he filled with distinction until 1915.

The Henry Ericsson Company was entrusted with the building of the majority of structures at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station, as well as other great industrial plants essential to the national safety during the second World War.

Nathaniel Leverone became a fast friend of Mr. Ericsson, and a very warm relationship existed between them. Mr. Leverone time and again refers to this rigidly honest and fine man. The occasion of the engagement of his daughter Martha to a young man he so much admired pleased him greatly; and because of the interest they shared in the out of doors, he particularly remembers Mr. Ericsson's comment at their engagement party, "Nat has picked the fairest flower in my garden." Of course that was Mr. Leverone's belief too! He always speaks of Mrs. Leverone as his young lady and never misses an opportunity to comment that she is dainty, refined and gentle—three of the qualities he most admires in women.

Nathaniel and Martha Leverone went by motorcar to New England and Canada on their wedding trip. That was an ambitious adventure in 1925, even though the roads in the east were vastly superior to those in the middle west at that time.

In almost every feature story that has been written about Nathaniel Leverone, he has been saluted as a husband who takes his wife on an annual vacation, in spite of his demanding schedule. The Leverones are very close, and it is not at all surprising that as a regular routine they enjoy long vacations together; it could scarcely be otherwise. They have many friends who share their interests. The Leverone daughter, Meredith, was born in Chicago and grew up in the warm circle of Leverone comradeship.

In 1927, when he was president of the Interfraternity Club of Chicago, young Mr. Leverone was reproaching his fellow "Old Grads" for setting under-

graduate fraternity men poor moral examples. In a story in the Chicago Daily Journal, he said that the morals of undergraduates of the middle twenties were infinitely better than those of students early in the century. "In recent conversations with college presidents I have been told that most of the so-called college drinking occurs at football games, and the disorderly ones are not the students but the visiting graduates, who sometimes assist in leading younger fraternity brothers into wild parties." This, it may be recalled, was in the "coonskin coat and flapper era."

Mr. Leverone believes fraternity life improves moral and ethical standards, and contributes to social adjustment. His activities in the Interfraternity Club in Chicago were vividly described in one of the organizations brochures:

"Hailing from Keene, New Hampshire, and graduating from Dartmouth in the Class of 1906, he came to Chicago and became president both of Phi Gamma Delta alumni and of Dartmouth College alumni. And in doing so, he completely upset all of our ideas about the New England type which Mr. Coolidge exemplified so well. We had pictured New Englanders as cold and austere people, inclined to remain aloof and silent, slow to make friendships, who carried their careful dollars in pocket purses. And here was a born and bred New Englander who was none of these things, who was in fact the exact opposite of everything we had ever supposed a New Englander to be. An idealist at heart, Nat strongly believed that college-bred men should play an active part as citizens, and he foresaw the great influence that the Interfraternity Club could

wield in a community like Chicago where political leadership had come largely from the lower levels of society."

Nathaniel Leverone took on the job of finding speakers and entertainers for the Thursday luncheons at the Interfraternity Club. There were reports that the meetings in the Florentine Room of the Congress Hotel "became more popular than the Follies used to be when Ziegfeld really put on a show." Mr. Leverone remembers the governors of states, the stars of the art and entertainment world and other dynamic "big names" who appeared. The Interfraternity Club historians remember that guests and members were soon beating a path to the door of the Interfraternity Club every Thursday noon, often more interested in listening to the introduction than to the speaker of the day. "It is a rare tribute to the astounding versatility of Nat Leverone to record the fact that we listened to him each Thursday noon for one solid year, nor did we ever once become tired or satiated. Each week brought out some new delight, some most amazing thing said in a new and different and quite astonishing way." A number of other organizations discontinued any meetings which conflicted with Interfraternity Club because they could not compete. It was through this activity that the silver-tongued Yankee gained his undisputed reputation as a speaker without peer.

Many years later, one of his Phi Gamma Delta brothers would say of Nathaniel Leverone, "He never lost the spark."

The man with the "spark" was also a founding

member of Phi Beta Kappa Associates and is credited with starting more Dartmouth Alumni groups than any other graduate.

When the transplanted New England Yankee wasn't occupied with his family, his business, and his community and fraternity activities, he was learning to know his adopted city as well as he knew the green hills and trails around Keene and Hanover in his native New Hampshire. His growing interest in Chicago, a city whose streets he kept walking in every direction, inspired deep concern for the state of affairs that had developed there. When he voiced his anxiety on one occasion, he was catapulted right into the middle of one of his most complex citizenship activities.

On that occasion, when he was speaking before a meeting of the Interfraternity Club, he discussed the sinister aspects of the crime situation in Chicago and made frank references to laxity among men who should be responsible for keeping law and order. Specifically, he "laid into" States Attorney Crowe with good old New England forthrightness. He felt that justice had sunk to a new level of deterioration with the murder of Mr. Crowe's righthand man.

In the audience was U. S. District Attorney George E. O. Johnson, who later prosecuted Al Capone.

The son of one of the city officials was also in the audience, so the news about Mr. Leverone's derogatory observations was promptly relayed. Later that afternoon, Leverone received a call from George Johnson who said that he had just learned that Crowe was going to try to indict his very recent critic for "criminal libel." District Attorney Johnson asked Nathaniel

Leverone to come over to his office "where I have several outstanding men of the city meeting. Everything you said was true, and if you are indicted, we will have an opportunity to prove it in court."

When Crowe learned that Leverone had the support of a group of distinguished and influential citizens, he did not attempt to prosecute.

It was as a direct result of that incident that Mr. Leverone was drawn into his important work with the Chicago Crime Commission, where he acted as secretary, director and member of the three-man executive committee which was composed of himself, Frank Loesch, and Col. Henry Barrett Chamberlain.

The Chicago Crime Commission had been organized in 1917 at a time when the city was practically overrun and controlled by criminal groups, Nathaniel Leverone recalls. Honest citizens of Chicago went about their business of building a great city, scarcely realizing that justice was constantly being abused in their courts of law. "Sometimes legal delays stretched out as long as twelve years," Mr. Leverone has pointed out, "and by that time the witnesses had either died or lost interest."

Why? Investigation proved that judges and juries could be bought and that murder cases could be postponed indefinitely. The judges claimed their dockets were so full they couldn't get around to them. The Crime Commission sent trained observers into Chicago courtrooms, and they were flabbergasted at the reports that came back. The situation was worse than they had suspected. "Not a single criminal judge had tried a case during the baseball season. . . . For over

five years, the average time spent in court by all criminal court judges was two and one quarter hours a day."

Confronted with the evidence, the judges answered almost insolently, "So what are you going to do about it?"

They were unimpressed when they were told that the information would be given to the newspapers unless some reforms were introduced. When the story was splashed in headlines in the press, they discovered that the Crime Commission was not as easy to handle as the underworld characters with whom some of them had been on congenial terms.

The Crime Commission, later recognized internationally for its accomplishments, had to remain alert. The Volstead Act, in 1920, enabled the underworld to build an empire on the sale of illegal liquor. The name "Chicago" probably evolved from the Ojibway "Shekag-ong" or "wild onion place," and there were characters to make it live up to its name during the Roaring Twenties. Nathaniel Leverone remembers fighting to rid Chicago of Al Capone and other malodorous underworld personalities.

The well-manicured fingers of dapper racketeers were reaching into countless Chicago cash registers and tills, going after their "protection cuts." Armed hoodlums infiltrated every possible business, setting up their own laws, their own codes of ethics.

While Leverone was a member of the Crime Commission in 1928, the subject of slot and vending machines had become a topic for discussion. Nat Leverone spoke his indignation—like most gullible mortals, he

had been victimized occasionally by the "mechanical bandits." Slot and vending machines were included in any examinations of the crime picture. They were often a front for more sinister gambling devices; and obviously someone was making money from the shoddy slot machine racket, or the "penny-pocket-pickers" would have disappeared from the American scene long before.

To the newest member of the Crime Commission, "vending machines" were a couple of downright unsavory words, hanging on the illegitimate fringe of the underworld's skirts. The gyp devices gave half-sticks of gum for a penny and shriveled, musty candy bars for a nickel. Because servicing was irregular, the "goodies" in the machines suffered from old age—if they were fresh to begin with. Small-time racketeers usually bought bulk amounts of stale and spoiled candy, loaded the machines, and collected the easy pennies and nickels.

The candy and gum machines were not the only cheaters on the vending machine scene. Nat Leverone remembers an experience that irked him greatly, when he went from Chicago to Ann Arbor to visit a friend at the University of Michigan. He had to wait several hours between trains en route. Feeling dirty and tired, he inquired about a place where he might at least wash his face. A filthy, dingy lavatory at the depot contained a vending machine which blatantly advertised "soap and towel for five cents." Seeing no alternative, Leverone "bit." He received a piece of soap so thin the light showed through it—it was a shaving about the size of a razor blade. The "towel" was two thin squares

of toilet tissue. The weary traveler thought that that particular machine would not have a very long or useful life, but he did not contribute to its murder.

Nathaniel Leverone didn't think life should be filled with petty crookedness, or that corruption should be taken for granted. What if those vending machines were operated efficiently? What if the public had a chance to receive full value for each penny? What if good quality merchandise could be dispensed from units that were regularly serviced? Could vending machines be made respectable?

Mr. Leverone turned his attention away from the shabby machines, still thinking that someone ought to do something about them. The idea was germinating, but his interest in setting up modern service stations was great at this point. The real estate business was brisk, his wise investments were proving profitable, and he was busy participating in a number of other worthwhile activities, which now included serving as vice-president of the Chicago Better Business Bureau.

Among the famous personalities with whom Nathaniel Leverone had contact during that period was Clarence Darrow, the renowned criminal lawyer. Although Paul Darrow, Clarence Darrow's son, was a Dartmouth friend, Nat reserved judgment on the elder Darrow until he met him. When Mr. Darrow showed respect for the young New Englander's talents in an argument, they became good friends. Nathaniel later heard first-hand stories about Clarence Darrow's surreptitious generosity in defending the underprivileged. On one occasion, he was present in court to hear the prosecuting attorney thundering at the jury, and Clar-

ence Darrow in turn speaking softly and almost confidentially and winning the case for his client.

Leverone noted that Darrow always wanted a jury of sympathetic people who might be related to someone who had been in similar difficulties with the law. A dedicated opponent of capital punishment, no client that Darrow defended was ever sentenced to death.

Chapter Four

An Upward Stumble

One day in 1928, a lithe man bounded up the stairs, his hand in his pocket for change for fare, to catch the elevated. As his foot caught on the top step, he pitched forward and almost went sliding under the turnstile. The rumble of the departing train sounded in his ears as he tried to regain his balance. After he had recovered his dignity, the man looked ruefully at a ripped seam in the side of his trousers.

Many men would stand in a corner, wasting their time, while they waited for the next train. Our debonair "tumbler" is easier to identify. After borrowing some safety pins from the woman ticket taker and installing them in strategic places, he got some change and headed for one of the weighing machines. Nat Leverone believed in making constructive use of his spare time!

The first penny he dropped in the weighing machine produced a card with astounding news — he weighed two hundred and sixty pounds. He put another penny in the same machine, and this time the

card greatly underestimated his normal weight of about one hundred and fifty-five pounds.

His exact weight still a dark secret, Nat Leverone decided he might as well get something for his money. He gave the gum machine a try; all he got was exercise when he pulled the lever. A peanut machine finally condescended to dole out a few moldy objects that he grimly discarded.

It made him furious to be taken advantage of, with no recourse but to accept the insult. He spoke to the woman ticket taker, and had to laugh despite his annoyance, as he told her, "A man will lose thousands of dollars on a bad stock, and take it in stride, and when he loses a penny to a vending machine he is lividly indignant. That is typically American—he resents being cheated out of one penny. He feels insulted when this occurs when he does not expect it."

There was a glint in Nat Leverone's eye as he headed for downtown Chicago on the next train. He had been a boy who had noticed aspects of nature that other people missed. He had followed faint trails that had led to fine rewards, like Roxbury pond. As a man, he was still noticing things that other people missed or took for granted. Fresh from that tumble on the elevated platform, he was seeing a new trail that he wanted to follow. He had been jolted into a feeling of personal responsibility about those vending machines. He felt his irritation turning to righteous wrath as he pondered a "penny gyp racket" that could so easily separate a man from several pennies and leave him absolutely nothing. Not even a fair chance to complain!

There would be other occasions, during the next

few years, when Mr. Leverone might wonder just what he had tumbled into, when he dashed to catch that train in 1928. He hadn't seen stars—he had seen a green light. Compared to some of his highly skeptical friends, he was fairly certain where he was going.

The Yankee from New England was multiplying pennies and nickels in his mind and reaching the conclusion that vending machines could be a healthy business instead of a petty racket—if they kept faith with the public. If inefficient service could keep those machines on walls all over the country, how much more could be accomplished by an honest, well-organized method of doing business!

The idea was getting a firm grip. Nat Leverone did not know how far it would go—he scarcely knew where to start. As the pages of the calendar were flipped over into 1929, the Chicago real estate man and financier found his mind dwelling on the thought of vending machines that would dispense a big, luscious, fresh nickel candy bar for a nickel, or a whole flavorful penny piece of gum for a penny—or be polite enough to return the customer's coin if the machine were empty.

Some of the machines were serviced once in awhile, Nat Leverone had to admit. He saw it happen! On one occasion, when he was waiting in a New York subway, he was treated to a rare demonstration of devotion to the vending machine business. A workman slouched casually up with an open pail of stale-looking peanuts and went about the business of loading the box, plunging grimy hands into the pail of "confections" and transferring them to the machine. When

the fellow took out a soiled handkerchief, wiped his nose and hands with it and then went back to loading the machine, Mr. Leverone shuddered for the customers whose pennies would buy those peanuts.

Obviously much of the vending machine business was controlled by people who were blithely indifferent to the welfare of the public. Some eager children might be pulled away from smudged candy and gum machines by their germ-conscious parents, but most parents would not know. The machines were there; they were accepted. Just because a business has a history of acceptance does not make its abuses ethical.

Not only was there lack of uniformity in the number of peanuts that would dribble out of most of the machines in that New York subway, but they were of poor quality. Peanuts were selling at eight cents a pound; but only four, five or six rancid specimens would be doled out for a penny. It was an insult to the intelligence of the American consumer, Leverone decided.

His feeling of exasperation led Nat Leverone to make an immediate survey of machines in a number of places, collecting about a hundred typical samples in separate envelopes. Deciding that he wouldn't feed them to a goat, Leverone took his "collector's items" to the so-called "tycoon of the vending service," who controlled the vending merchandise market through his monopoly on elevated and streetcar advertising. The man, it was rumored, believed that it was "good business" to short-change the public on the quantity and quality of vending machine stock.

Mr. Leverone has been a gentleman all his life,

but he immediately dispensed with the amenities by telling the reputed tycoon he had some impertinent questions to ask. His new acquaintance said he didn't mind, but he was surprised with the first penetrating question, "Why is the vending machine business so crooked?"

When Mr. "Tycoon" asked what Leverone meant, his visitor confronted him with those scrubby samples of rubbery, wilted peanuts. "Would you eat them?"

"No," was the frank answer.

"They came out of your vending machines not more than half an hour ago."

The man behind the desk smiled and retorted affably, "Oh, that! The public is used to that—it doesn't expect anything else." He did have the grace—or the uneasy conscience—to redden slightly.

Nat Leverone recalled some of the history lessons he had learned from an economics professor at Dartmouth. He reminded the tycoon that the railroads had once been callously arrogant about the welfare and rights of people in general, and that the objects of their abuse had raised their sons "to love your country but hate the railroads." When some of the sons grew up and became legislators, they raised the taxes of the railroads and forced reforms on them. The large railroads had to pay through the nose, and many of the small ones were forced out of business. No matter who you are, it doesn't pay to say, "The public be damned!"

Mr. "Tycoon" told Mr. Leverone that "he would be dead and buried before full weight would be given

in vending machines," but he was around when Nat Leverone demonstrated that an honest man can deal fairly with the public and still make a phenomenal success of a formerly shoddy enterprise.

The arrogant Mr. "Tycoon," who had over-extended himself in a number of directions, later felt the full impact of the Depression. He had the dubious distinction of being the first person to seek refuge in 77B of the Federal bankruptcy statute which allows a man in financial difficulties to "freeze his indebtedness."

By 1929, Nathaniel Leverone had argued the vending machine problem pro and con in his mind. People patronized vending machines, but they surely would welcome better service than they were getting, if it were available. Leverone was familiar with the philosophy on which every great business is founded: "Employing imagination and good judgment, the successful businessman finds out what the public wants and gives it to them." He thinks in terms of meeting a human need, rather than "big business," Mr. Leverone has often emphasized.

If Nat Leverone had believed in soothsayers and had gone to one who happened to guess right, she might have looked into her crystal ball and warned him that 1929 would be a bad year for trying to launch a new business or reform an old one. And if he had believed her, people would probably still be eating second-rate, moldy peanuts out of those old contraptions. It was a poor year to launch anything; money was "tight."

The former New Englander's major assets, when he started to set up the new company, were a number

of relatives and friends who had a total of fifty thousand dollars' worth of faith in his business ability. Successful businessmen themselves, they shared Nat Leverone's belief that the new service was a necessary and worthwhile one. Each of the original investors pledged ten thousand dollars, five thousand to buy equipment and set up the operation, and another five thousand when it would be needed for initial operating expenses.

As they moved along, the people with whom they did business became interested in the possibilities of the young company and were urged to invest. In those "tight money days," merchandise and other services sometimes were accepted in payment for stock.

Tumble or no tumble, Nat Leverone strode into the vending machine jungle with his eyes wide open. He had examined the business as a member of the Crime Commission and the Better Business Bureau. Then he and some of his associates had investigated and evaluated the vending machine business in a number of cities. They had discussed the situation with people who were involved in it and whose reports were not exactly encouraging.

After careful investigation, Nat Leverone determined that it would be impossible to learn how to run a vending company from the past experience of others in the industry.

He did, however, learn a great deal about what NOT to do. He did not gain one constructive idea—everything appeared to be negative. No accurate records were kept in the business, and vending people did not conduct their business with any system. Most

of them did not know whether they made or lost money until after the end of the month when they could determine whether they had any money in the bank. No record of each machine was kept, nor was there any record of when they had been serviced. Their servicemen did not wear uniforms, nor carry credentials of any kind. They did not have proper storage rooms for products they sold. He recalls that they had no trouble shooters who could be contacted immediately, nor did they have inspectors to see whether or not the machines were being properly serviced, and that merchandise or money was not being siphoned off by anyone.

Most of his friends hadn't analyzed the business as he had. They assumed that all slot-operated machines were somehow tied up with gambling and the underworld. When they heard that this dignified, well-known Chicago businessman—a well-bred New Englander and Dartmouth graduate in the first place!—was going into the questionable vending machine business, they might have wondered if he'd need to install bullet-proof glass in his car.

In this new enterprise, Leverone had decided, everything must be the opposite of the old. A rose by any name? The term "vending machine" was making him squirm. Almost his first gesture was to coin the phrase "Automatic Merchandising" to describe the field of endeavor and "Canteen" to designate legitimate merchandise vendors as a means of emphasizing the fact that the mere presence of coin mechanisms on a piece of mechanical equipment did not make it a "slot ma-

chine." The word "Canteen" had become widely-recognized and popular during World War I.

Having separated the good guys from the gangsters, Nat Leverone and his associates took a reassuring look at the code of ethics under which they would operate. A coin machine, to succeed, must:

1. Give the public a square deal by operating machines that invariably returned the coin if no merchandise was vended.

2. Give the public a square deal by selling full-size, standard units of merchandise of known value.

3. Protect owners of locations where machines were placed by sharing receipts honestly and equitably.

4. Protect the public by servicing machines at least once a week so that only strictly fresh merchandise would be vended.

5. Immediately win the public's confidence by selling only goods of wide consumer acceptance.

6. Reduce, if not eliminate completely, the temptation of the public to cheat the machines, with slugs, by creating mechanisms which would reject them.

7. Create such a big volume that a small profit would insure a reasonable total profit.

8. Be manned by a high type of trained service personnel which would constantly build up, instead of tear down, public confidence.

There should have been another point listed—be braced for anything! When they started searching for

the type of machine they wanted, the Automatic Canteen people realized that they had already taken giant strides away from the old category. They were operating on an entirely different level. Manufacturers of the old-type vending machines had never bothered to install a coin-refunding mechanism for empty machines! Moreover, there were no vending machines in existence that were made to handle full-sized candy bars or packages of gum.

As Nat Leverone had discovered, the old machines suffered from a variety of "bugs." Because there was not a single satisfactory machine being manufactured, they would have to design one that would live up to all the fundamental principles on their list. Leverone sent out a call for engineers and went into a conference with them.

The infant Automatic Canteen Company of America had no intention of going into the business of manufacturing its own machines. Mr. Leverone and his associates consulted with engineers who surveyed the field and helped them to design the first dispensers. The actual manufacturing of the Canteens was turned over to outside companies.

When its first order for several thousand dispensers became a reality, Automatic Canteen should have been ready to move forward. Those first balky machines, which had scraped the bottom of the company's treasury, turned out to be as disappointing as the ones the sharpers had controlled; they would often keep the customer's nickel while he stood drooling for one of the candy bars inside the box.

Nat Leverone and his engineers missed most of

their sleep during the following weeks. Night-and-day concentration finally produced a workable machine.

Over and over again, in the years ahead, the situation appeared desperate for the new company. If Nat Leverone had not been a fellow who hated to let go of a good idea, he would have had countless legitimate reasons for giving up the struggle. He might have thrown up his hands in horror, as manufacturers usually did when he first approached them for merchandise. They could produce facts and figures to show that millions of dollars had already been dissipated in vending machine schemes and that very few reputable companies had ever shown a profit. They had taken their losses and gotten out, while the getting was good—and Nat Leverone was advised to do the same.

New Englanders are noted for tenacity. They plant crops in rock patches and make them grow. Nathaniel Leverone did not get out of his private rock patch.

The first candy bars that Canteens handled were the twelve candy bars then manufactured by the Curtiss Candy Company of Chicago, which included the popular Baby Ruths. Otto Schnering, the president of Curtiss, did not exactly leap at the idea of doing business with an unproved young vending company, even one that was headed by as reputable a businessman as Nathaniel Leverone. He had already sized up the vending market and had refused to do business with operators who usually wanted to increase their profits by cutting down on the size and quality of the bar. Mr. Schnering wanted to protect the fine reputation of his confections, and Mr. Leverone convinced him

he would help him do it by putting full-sized, genuine Curtiss bars into his Canteens. As a gesture of good faith and good will, Leverone contracted to handle Curtiss bars exclusively. There were record-breaking sales—for several weeks.

Now, it is possible to get too much of a good thing, if you get it too often. After all the customers had eaten about twenty Baby Ruths and her cousins in a row, they began to hanker after a change. They could walk right past those Canteens and feel nary a quiver in the old sweet tooth. The bewildered Canteen people started to investigate. It didn't take too long to solve the problem, because people generally are not bashful about saying it's time for a change, Buster!

The founder of Canteen Company went back to Mr. Schnering who was an understanding soul; and besides, Nat Leverone was an eloquent gentleman when it came to explaining the difficulty. Mr. Schnering said he would strike out the "exclusive" clause in the contract, so Canteen could give its customers the variety they demanded.

The Hershey Company needs no introduction. When Nat Leverone went to talk candy business with W. F. R. Murrie, president of the Hershey Chocolate Corporation, he was surprised to find that he needed no introduction either. It was almost as though Mr. Murrie had expected him to walk in the door. The Automatic Canteen Company had already been investigated and found to be honest and respectable.

"We have confidence in your plan," Mr. Murrie announced. "You can have all the Hershey products you can sell."

His forthright endorsement made Leverone visualize the vast expansion plans that he believed might be a natural part of Canteen's future.

Mr. Murrie hastened to add that the Automatic Canteen officials should not be too optimistic. It was his considered opinion that the business would never grow to be a gigantic one. Mr. Murrie publicly acknowledged, later on, that he had grossly underestimated Canteen's potential—and the Hershey Company was happier than anybody about it.

Periods of crisis continued to be numerous as the young Canteen Company struggled for survival. That first summer, the firm learned the hard way about the effect of heat on candy bars. As the temperature climbed toward ninety-five on a sizzling day in June, the chocolate-covered bars started oozing and the solid chocolate bars went limp in their "tin foil" wrappers. A million and a half of them were a complete loss, at a time when there were already too many red figures in the company books.

Automatic Canteen laid the foundation for a laboratory that would test the quality of candy, its ability to withstand temperature changes, its purity and its nutritional value. The irrevocable fact that chocolate flows at a temperature of ninety degrees has never been forgotten. Makers of candy bars began to create confections especially designed to withstand summer heat.

Good times were not just around the next corner, in the early Thirties. The country was not shaking itself out of the depression—not next week—or next month—or next year. Businessmen like Nat Leverone

kept holding on, somehow meeting their payrolls, somehow inching forward while less hardy associates dropped by the wayside.

Leverone had not lost faith in the economic future of his country. He could work harder than he had ever worked, and he hadn't forgotten how to laugh once in awhile.

Chapter Five

Canteen Combats Fatigue

While other businessmen were curtailing their activities during the depression, Nathaniel Leverone was pushing ahead with the modest expansion of Canteen in the Chicago area. As the dauntless director of the company in its most desperate days, he had to be everything from a salesman to an educator. He had to make certain that Canteens were installed where they would do everybody—including the customers and the Canteen Company—the most good. To widen the field of operations, he needed to develop a "sales pitch" that would be both honest and persuasive. Never at a loss for words or imaginative ideas, he looked the situation over, debated its possibilities with his Canteen colleagues, and went to work.

Few industries had tried to investigate the effects of between-meal hunger on the efficiency of employee performance, and most supervisors and managers were known to frown on the idea of workers taking time out to nibble on anything. Nat Leverone realized that he would need to introduce some fresh ideas around the countryside.

Did he send out letters that might end up in the wastebasket? Did he send out salesmen equipped with order pads, who might get doors slammed in their faces? Not this ingenious New England Yankee!

The original Canteens were much smaller than they are now. Loading up the tonneau of Leverone's big Lincoln car with the jolly bright-red candy vendors, he and a capable assistant named Bill Swingler would descend on an industrial plant and proceed to put on a first-rate performance—in two acts. First the highly articulate Mr. Leverone would go into the plant and try to convince the sometimes reluctant manager that the employees needed the service of Canteens, which were stocked regularly with the finest candy bars that could be bought anywhere. Tired, hungry workers, the Canteen man suggested, have their minds on their stomachs instead of their jobs. It was common sense to assume that the pangs of hunger might make them jumpy and nervous. They might even be more accident-prone, if they kept one eye on the job and the other on the clock to see if lunch-time had almost come. Workers who are not hungry are good-natured —they might even come to love their bosses.

The far-fetched suggestion would usually start the supervisor sputtering, "B-b-but . . ." Candy bars in industrial plants — why, they had never considered such a startling innovation! "This is a place to work. Candy is for children! What do you think this is—a kindergarten?"

"Candy is a wholesome energy food, as well as a treat," Leverone would assure him. "And Canteens will create more good will toward management than

you realize." He would suggest that Canteens be placed and the proceeds derived by management be used for such employee benefits as the welfare fund and athletic equipment.

By the time the Canteen man had finished his sales pitch, with considerable emphasis on the fine quality, full-sized, fresh, delectable candy bars that would always be within easy reach, the manager probably was hungering for a candy bar himself.

Then came act two. While his prospect might still be wavering a bit, Nat Leverone would signal Bill Swingler to make a grand entrance and together they would install one of the Canteens on the spot.

"Try it out," Leverone would say. "See if it doesn't brighten everybody up!" There was no argument about the brightening-up potential of those first Canteens. A garish fire-engine red, they stood out like a flash of flame against the dull factory walls.

Nat Leverone's "educational" approach turned out to be more dramatically sound than he had imagined. He was correct when he predicted that handy Canteens would relieve the "drudgery atmosphere" in factories and industrial plants. It gave workers a boost to treat themselves to a candy bar at a time when their physical and mental energies were at low ebb. Because the presence of the vendors cut down on fatigue, accident rates and mistakes were reduced. Later tests, in a plant where workers were free to patronize Canteens, revealed forty per cent fewer accidents than in a similar plant where workers could eat only at noontime.

There were dozens of new complications and ex-

periences as the company began to gain a foothold. At one stage, Canteen tried packaging good quality candy bars of their own brand. The public showed its disapproval by hanging onto its nickels. Never again would Canteens be stocked with anything but standard, advertised brands.

Nat Leverone chuckles about the public's devotion to products that are vigorously advertised. He knows of a chain store organization which exactly duplicated the coffee of a well-known company and sold it for five cents a pound less. At first the coffee enjoyed a flourishing sale, but then the customers began to demand the brand-name coffee. "No matter how earnestly the clerks explained that there was no difference between the two, the buyers insisted on the coffee with the popular brand name on it—and they were happy to pay the extra five cents to get it." It just seemed to have a different flavor! Keeping alert to this psychology has saved Canteen many thousands of dollars.

Cutthroat competition might turn a quick profit for the businessman who doesn't care how many enemies he makes, but the Canteen organization knew that you cannot build up a thriving, enduring enterprise by tangling with your closest competitors. Canteen had places to go; it was being headed into the future!

As he studied the competition from all angles, Nat Leverone still kept noticing little things that most people might walk right past. Candy customers, he observed, would seldom put a coin into a machine if there were clerks to hand them their purchase from a counter. Like wanting to pay five cents more for the name on a pound of coffee, this was probably a quirk

of human nature that even the customer couldn't explain; but it reduced the amount of machine-shifting that the company had to do. No Canteen was ever installed in a place where it might compete with a clerk who had a counter full of candy bars to sell. The clerk would be the first to appreciate that gesture of good will.

There were some expressions of protest from retail candy merchants at first. If workers bought candy on the job, Canteen would be taking the business away from them. Nathaniel Leverone reminded them that this was a sale that might not otherwise be made, because workers do not ordinarily leave their jobs to go to a store and buy candy. He assured them that handy Canteens would stimulate a healthy "candy habit"—that people would take candy for granted, instead of reserving it for special occasions. Tests revealed that retail candy sales did increase in stores when there was a candy dispensing machine in a nearby factory or business place. The acceptance of candy as part of the daily modern diet is evident in every grocery store today. Years ago, one or two candy bars were purchased only after a few minutes of careful deliberation.

Looking backward in 1956, Nathaniel Leverone was to say, "One of the rewards of the pioneer who lives to see civilization come to the uncharted wilderness through which he blazed a trail is the realization of fondly held dreams." There was a time when trailblazing in that "uncharted wilderness" appeared desperately dismal.

Early in the thirties, Nat Leverone was not cutting a wide swath through his private forest primeval. The

trail was barely discernible. An old hand at stalking through deserts, swamps and wastelands, Leverone was convinced that the man who keeps persevering faithfully will always come upon a clearing in the wilderness. Until about 1932, it appeared that the Canteen Company would weather the depression. Then sales gradually slipped downward, as workers in industrial plants and offices were dismissed or put on "part time." It looked as though Leverone and the Canteen Company had come up against a solid barrier to progress. All the assets had been sunk into the firm, and bills and payrolls kept coming due.

In most Men of Achievement biographies, the distinguished heroes start life as barefoot boys. Nathaniel Leverone—son of a successful businessman and a successful businessman himself—saw the future fortunes of his Canteen company figuratively being reduced to the "barefoot boy" class in 1932. Perhaps that's the time of life when it hurts most, especially if it might also cancel out "the realization of fondly held dreams."

The depression played no favorites. People were eating rice, macaroni, and potatoes when they had them—not candy bars. The depression did not spare the infant Canteen business, and its founder felt as though he had hit bottom.

After the Hard Times Thirties, you would hear comedians say, "We were very poor—we didn't have a mother!" Friends were even more scarce, especially the kind who could afford to offer a helping hand and were willing to make a magnificent gesture of faith.

At that bleak moment in his career, Nat Leverone received a visit from an old classmate. The man didn't

look very prosperous himself, but he said he had a small factory. He must have been a special sort of person, because he groped for words to spare the feelings of a fellow-businessman who was noted for his integrity.

"Nat," he said, "I hope you won't take offense at what I have to say. I know things are tough for you. I don't have much, but I want you to take my $5,000 in savings, without a note, and take twenty-five years if you need it to pay me back."

Leverone recalled the experience as one of the few times in his life he ever cried.

That moment of crisis could be compared to the time when he had come at last to a clearing in the swamps, when he visited Mobile. He had been attracted to the swamplands when he glimpsed them from the train, and he took an interurban bus to get closer to them. Fascinated, he was drawn farther and farther into the moist bogs by the sight of flowers and plants that appeared familiar. The pitcher plant was not the same as the New England variety, but there was a striking similarity. He marveled at the unusual trees and plants as he went along; but he took time to line up three trees to help him keep his sense of direction, as he always did.

Nat had gone into the swamp at one o'clock in the afternoon. Before he realized how much time had passed, it was five o'clock and he was sloshing through knee-deep water that did not recede as he walked. Two hours later, although he did not think he was lost, he began to get discouraged and was about to look for a tree in which he could safely roost for the night.

The murmur of muted voices came drifting to him from somewhere in the swamp. He felt cool and collected enough—was he suddenly hearing things? Wondering if he had been stricken with "the first manifestation of a hopelessly lost person," he moved toward the sounds of life, the waters growing shallower as he neared a clearing. In the movies, or in one of the witty parodies that he sometimes dreamed up, our hero would have come upon a barbershop quartet warbling "Chloe!" Reality was no less picturesque. In front of a miserable shanty was a great roaring fire, with about twenty Negroes gathered around it.

"That was one of the most beautiful sights I had ever seen!" Nathaniel Leverone recalls. He could not understand their drawling Southern accents, and they could not understand his New England twang, but they came to a mutual understanding in "sign language." They pointed out a path which Nat followed to get back to the bus line.

When he finally arrived back at his hotel in Mobile—dirty, disheveled and completely exhausted—the clerk said, "Get out, you bum!"

Nat Leverone identified himself by telling the clerk his room number, and the fellow became very congenial, although embarrassed, when he realized that he had called a guest a bum. Still dressed in his "swamp-exploring outfit," Leverone had to go right into the hotel dining room because it was on the verge of closing. He must have caused a slight stir. He had worn the only suit and shoes he had with him, and the helpful clerk arranged to have the suit cleaned during

the night—but the shoes had turned to "an almost unwearable set of boards" by morning.

Whether he was in the mountains, the swamps, or the automatic merchandising jungle, Nat Leverone always seemed to find "a clearing ahead" somewhere.

It was almost as though the friend with five thousand dollars had given Nat Leverone a transfusion of renewed faith and optimism at the lowest point in the history of the Canteen operation. The situation began to improve almost immediately. Depression-poor American workers had discovered that a fresh, full-sized candy bar was the cheapest, most hunger-satisfying way to bridge the gap between breakfast and the evening meal. Now there were more nickels than candy bars in the Canteens, in factories and business houses that were still functioning.

The Automatic Canteen Company became an important part of the depression economy as hard-headed factory supervisors came to realize that "Candy, which had previously been considered as a treat for children, actually constituted a food which was the source of quick energy for hardworking factory employees." Mr. Canteen had done a top-notch job as an "educator" — his efforts had proved that eating candy bars on the job could lighten "the fatigue load," and could actually reduce accidents and boost efficiency.

Candy bars were usually purchased by wholesalers in large quantities in order to take advantage of discounts. Small local merchants purchased boxes of twenty-four or forty-eight bars which came from the case stock of the wholesaler. Although in good condi-

tion, the candy was not as fresh as the candy vended in Canteens, and the response to the top fresh quality of the new bars out of Canteens was surprising, for the consumer enjoyed a new experience with the same old bars.

To a New Englander, simplicity is the epitome of good taste. Those garish red Canteens were beginning to make Nat Leverone wince. In case of fire, there was danger that workers might dash for them instead of the fire alarm boxes. After they had made a distinct impression for awhile, Leverone decided to subdue their glaring glory by adding some artistic streaks of gold leaf to the red surfaces. That is the reason why Canteens are no longer fire engine red.

Constant attention was given to developing and maintaining the necessary top flight personnel to assure the continued progress and growth of the company. Competent people began to recognize Canteen's potential and were welcomed into the company. It was another example of a great American tradition—of getting in on "the ground floor" and contributing to the success of a promising industry.

The idea of adding service features was constantly emphasized. After several thousand machines had been installed, someone in the Canteen organization thought of putting mirrors on them. Experiments with mirror-equipped Canteens proved that sales were stimulated. A man, pausing to adjust his tie in the mirror, would decide that a fresh candy bar would taste good right now. A girl, checking her make-up, would realize that it's a long time until lunch. The mirrors also protected the machines—because most people are superstitious

and would not abuse the machines for fear of breaking the mirrors and stirring up seven years of bad luck for themselves. Canteen immediately spent thousands of dollars equipping all old machines with mirrors, and the investment paid off.

The slouchy fellow with the open pail of peanuts belonged to the bygone "vending machine" days. The Canteen service man, in a natty maroon and gold uniform, became the representative of the brisk new age with a revolutionary way of doing business. Uniforms gave identification, representing quality and reliability. With identified daily service, Canteen men enjoyed the same status as the neighborhood policeman. There are winter-weight and summer-weight uniforms, with the Canteen name prominently displayed on them.

The Canteen people realized that fastidiousness and good grooming would make a favorable impression, but there were other factors to be considered. Although a Canteen man was not involved, one incident was typical of the obstacles they faced. The owner of a silk mill reported the theft of several expensive bolts of silk, during the early years of Canteen's history. A man who had represented himself as a vending machine service man was suspected of smuggling them out in a large "confections" box he carried. When the Canteen people heard the story, neat uniforms were chosen as a mark of identification. It was good publicity for the Canteen Company when a sprucely uniformed service man would march into a factory to make his rounds of the machines. He was supposed to be noticed, and he was.

If the Canteen man were young and attractive, he

might have encountered some difficulties. According to one feature story, "They (the uniformed service men) could be spotted a block away. If one of the handsome young men stopped to talk to a girl, he was reported." Business was business, during business hours —and no dilly-dallying allowed!

Nathaniel Leverone and his associates kept taking the multiple hurdles they encountered. When a service man was injured inside a plant, liability insurance was deemed absolutely necessary to protect the service men, the plant owners, the workers, and the Automatic Canteen Company against damage suits for any injuries suffered by Canteen service men during their business calls.

A customer complained that he had bitten into a bar of candy containing a small chunk of foreign substance—perhaps a piece of rock. Canteen instituted an inflexible rule that the manufacturers of all the products sold in Canteens must carry product insurance.

When the company noticed that Canteen service men were using a motley array of beaten-up containers to transport their confections from their cars to the machines, they designed a neat, light aluminum carrying case. This standard piece of equipment, like the uniforms, was an additional factor in building up confidence.

Many companies have saluted the Canteen service man—pleasant, polite, and a bringer of sweet tidings for the hungry worker at a weary moment of the day.

Chapter Six

Canteen Goes Nation-wide

Even when he was almost swamped with all the complexities of launching the infant Canteen operation, Nat Leverone somehow managed to attend meetings of worthwhile groups and participate in their programs and activities.

Unless there are some public relations incentives involved, most people try to slink into the nearest doorway to keep from being buttonholed into membership in public service and religious organizations. If they do get caught, they will usually have a dozen reasons why they cannot accept leadership positions.

Nat Leverone did not set out to be a leader. One thing led to another, before he could defend himself. Then, too, there was always a feeling of interest and responsibility. He has said that "If one earns his living in a community, he is not worthy to be called a citizen unless he, in his own small way, tries to make the place a little better." He knew that dedicated men could turn ineffectual groups into worthwhile organizations for the betterment of their communities and

their nation. As that motto said: "Any good that I may do . . ."

Most of the time, Mr. Leverone found himself at the speakers' table or behind the lectern, captivating his audience with his spontaneous wit and thunderbolts of wisdom on unpredictable subjects. It was a reciprocal arrangement — Nathaniel Leverone enjoyed talking, and people enjoyed listening to him.

Some of his acquaintances probably said, "I wouldn't be in that poor fellow's boots—he can't call his soul his own! All those chairmanships and speeches and charity activities—he's a smart businessman and a great fellow, but he hasn't learned that time is worth money."

It would have done their little hearts good if they could have seen "that poor fellow" in action around the countryside. Employing Henry Ford's plan of branches and distributors, the company was expanding nation-wide. Canteen was arranging to lease equipment to locally owned and operated distributorships from coast to coast. There were difficulties and handicaps, but many Americans were eager to go into the promising new enterprise. There were honest men who hadn't had an opportunity of this kind since before the stock market crash. There were chiselers, too, who had to be weeded out. People who were allowed Canteen franchises needed to be investigated—Canteen wanted no drones, free-loaders, or corrupt operators.

In places where Canteen's square deal policy was not yet on record, there were still shadows of the old "vending machine stigma" to combat. In his "home country," Nat Leverone had made a mountain out of

a molehill and had driven the weasels out. But a lot of Americans were still eating those stale peanuts and dried-out candy bars in vending machines that hadn't been properly cleaned for ten years. In addition to expanding Canteen operations, the company had to keep educating the general public to its progressive aims and ideals, all across the country.

They had faced skepticism in Chicago, and this was the same story. How did these people know that Canteen wasn't just another revival of some questionable old-type vending and slot machine rackets? Here is where Nat Leverone's unselfish contribution of time and energy made him a man to be greeted with respect. He belonged to a number of national organizations. Wherever he went, he would be welcomed as a visiting guest of some worthy service group. He didn't need to try to get his foot in the door—someone was always swinging it wide open to shake his hand.

If a likely candidate for a Canteen distributorship happened to be encountering difficulties in setting himself up in business in Peoria or Waterloo, Mr. Leverone would go to bat for him. When just plain Joe Smith realized that he was in business with a man of Mr. Leverone's talents and prestige, it gave him a special feeling of respect for the Canteen operation and a boost in self-confidence to know that he was part of it. He could take pride in being associated with a group that was headed by a man of acknowledged integrity, with a fine record of ungrudging service activity in many fields.

A newly-franchised Canteen operator was having trouble getting his Canteens installed in a big factory

in his town. It usually happened that Nat Leverone was a fraternal or fraternity brother of one of the management people in that organization. He probably belonged to the same national group as the town banker —and the mayor and the pastor of the new franchiser's church. He hadn't done it on purpose, but you can't beat a combination like that!

Naturally there were numerous prospects who were anxious to get into "a good thing." They would be happy to buy Canteens and operate them in the way they saw fit, with the Canteen name to give them respectability.

"Oh, no!" said Nat Leverone. Canteen actually gave away valuable franchises, but it insisted on keeping strict control of the equipment and the method of operation. There was a possibility that some of the Canteens might fall into the hands of unscrupulous "manipulators" who would drag the good name of the company back down the road to the Dark Vending Age of the Roaring Twenties. His experience with shoddy slot machine products was still fresh in Leverone's mind. His organization would keep the name of the Automatic Canteen Company respectable and honest by making certain that no "sharpies" could operate under its banners, substituting short-weight, inferior merchandise to make a wider margin of profit. Consumer confidence must be kept at a level of high regard for the integrity of the company.

Not content merely to hand a book of instructions to a new distributor, Canteen made plans to set up a rigorous training school in Chicago to prepare Canteen personnel to function smoothly and competently.

Canteen distributors were required to operate under rigid rules from the head office, with frequent inspections and check-ups. No sloppiness, inefficiency or poor public relations practices would be allowed, whether the site of the Canteen operation was Chicago or Coopersville. The distributors knew they would be expected to live up to a high code of ethics. They were chosen because they were considered capable of maximum performance, day after day, year after year. Always looking ahead up the trail, Nathaniel Leverone could visualize many of these Canteen distributors celebrating their tenth, twentieth and thirtieth anniversaries as members of the Automatic Canteen family. These people comprised "the high type of trained service personnel which would constantly build up, instead of tear down, public confidence." By building on firm foundations, Leverone and the other Canteen organizers would be able to distribute responsibility as the company grew and prospered.

In addition to insisting on one hundred per cent honesty all through the firm, the Canteen people continued to enforce the rule that all units must be placed where they would not compete with manually-staffed retail outlets.

Commissions are paid to all the firms in which the Canteens are installed, and it has been a practice to encourage factory and office executives to devote the money to the welfare of the employees. Canteen commissions have bought athletic uniforms and equipment for customers' teams; they have been used for everything from flower funds to safety gloves. Because the workers are most likely to enjoy the extra margin of

benefit from the money they put into the machines, Canteen believes that it will minimize theft, sabotage and the use of slugs.

SLUGS? The Automatic Canteen Company realized, early in its history, that there were petty pilferers on the other side of the fence too. If the racketeers had behaved like pirates, a certain segment of the public was equally wily and sticky-fingered. Each individual attempt to outwit the machines might have been considered petty, but the total figures were astounding. During Canteen's first year of business, $30,000 worth of slugs poured out of the collection boxes along with the lawful coin of the republic. One operator of two hundred peanut machines took in 14,000 slugs in his first month as a Canteen man.

The Canteen engineers started a lengthy battle of wits with the bogus money addicts. They installed magnets to fish out the iron slugs, and a three-pronged device to reject slugs with holes in them. The rascals seemed to be working more desperately than the engineers. As the slug passers kept turning out more sophisticated imitations, the engineers gradually perfected electrical devices to test conductivity, weigh the coins, measure them for thickness, bite into them to detect lead or tin, and pass them on to a magnetic steel bar which tests for traces of other alien metals. This complicated procedure takes place in the space of a moment, as the coin travels down into the slot. Then it is accepted or rejected by the machine.

Much to the embarrassment of slug-passers, mere rejection of fake coins was not enough for one imaginative Canteen dealer. When a phony coin was in-

serted in his machines, a loud bell would ring and a sign reading "YOU CHEATED ME!" would light up.

"Once," Nat Leverone recalls, "our company bowed to defeat when candy machines in a certain factory were found packed with slugs at the end of each month.

"Our trouble-shooters couldn't fathom the mystery of how the slugs passed the intricate detection devices on our candy vendors. Investigation revealed that the factory produced blank coins for small Latin-American countries. The workers simply helped themselves to the blanks and ate thousands of our bars free. The only solution was to yank the machines out of there."

In another instance, Yankee ingenuity hit a new high in imagination and a new low in chicanery. Candy bars would disappear in the Canteens in a certain refrigeration-equipment plant, and there wouldn't be any coins or slugs in evidence, just a bit of water. Canteen's trouble-shooters learned that the workers at the plant made molds the exact size of nickels, filled them with water in the morning and froze enough to keep them in fresh, delicious candy bars all day. The weighing, biting and testing devices were installed on the machines in short order.

In one northern Michigan town, sixty Canteens in an industrial plant were as bare as Mother Hubbard's cupboard. One of the workers had found a way to make one nickel empty an entire Canteen.

There were "tilters and shakers" and every variety of Canteen heckler. Incidents have continued, but engineering safeguards have tripped up most of the chis-

elers. Before the deluge of phony coins had been slowed down to a negligible number, Canteen had amassed a staggering collection of between $80,000 and $100,000 worth of slugs, representing a wealth of crafty scheming that could have been dedicated to more worthwhile pursuits.

In the process of surveying the slug-passing flood, Canteens technicians and engineers came to some noteworthy conclusions. In certain sections of the country, there is a stronger pattern of honesty than in others. Because he remembered the chocolate vendor in that drugstore back in Keene and was willing to give his fellow men the same sympathetic benefit of the doubt, Nathaniel Leverone suggested that many people tried to cheat Canteen because they had so often been cheated by the old vending machines. "You know, people are inherently honest," he told a reporter.

By now it is apparent the Canteen people believe that no detail is too small to be worthy of sharp analysis. Even the weather gets the attention of their experts, technicians and engineers. The company discourages the sale of caramels when the mercury drops because, "In the winter caramel candy is hard as iron and is apt to break the bridgework of our customers." Milk chocolate, Leverone recalls with a wry expression, flows like water in the summer months.

The Canteen engineers have listened patiently to scores of inventors with revolutionary ideas for new merchandising marvels. The prize exhibit probably was the coin-in-the-slot cow. The customer was supposed to insert a coin, take a paper cup in hand, and

"milk" Bossy's replica with all the aplomb of Old MacDonald on his farm.

Whether it concerned Canteen business or citizenship activities, it is obvious that Nathaniel Leverone deserves tremendous credit for being active in situations that he might comfortably have stayed out of—and continuing to show conscientious, unflagging interest.

When the Canteen man was a guest speaker, his sense of humor dazzled and jolted his audiences. It also dazzled and jolted his friends, in everyday conversations, back in the early thirties. There was one bit of whimsey that they especially enjoyed quoting. "That Leverone surely is a droll fellow. Did you hear his latest joke? It's about that Canteen Company of his—that 'vending machine business,' only don't use those words in front of him! He says—listen, you'll get a kick out of this—he says that Automatic Canteen is going to be listed on the New York Stock Exchange some day! Isn't he a riot?"

Chapter Seven

That Tiny Fraction of a Cent

Undoubtedly some questions have been arising as the story of Automatic Canteen's development unfolds. How was it possible for Canteen to grow and thrive, with the type of service it was offering to the public? How could Canteen provide the finest of fresh, full-sized nickel candy bars and packages of gum—and a whole penny's worth of peanuts for a penny—and still stay in business? As Canteen franchises were established all over the nation, a whole new list of overhead expenses swamped the central office in Chicago. Expensive improvements and experiments were being made constantly in the multiple areas of Canteen activity. Did one of the directors have a "money tree" in his back yard?

Company officials had learned that the amount of profit on a five-cent candy bar was scarcely evident. Before any profit could be realized, a large number of bars had to be sold. After that volume point was reached, the net profit was still only "an infinitesimal fraction of a penny." A careful eye had to be kept on each individual Canteen unit; if its sales did not add

up to a certain minimum amount, it was shifted to a place where more customers would appreciate it. A minimum level of sales had to be maintained.

Canteen was built on a proper evaluation of the words, "A TINY FRACTION OF A CENT," plus a solid, conservative understanding of their potential. In a future editorial for the Canteen Quarterly, the founder of the firm would emphasize his respect for that minute amount of money. It wasn't as inconsequential as it sounded:

> "In today's inflated economy, when expenditures are commonly calculated in millions and billions of dollars, it may appear incongruous to attach tremendous importance to a tiny fraction of a cent. . . . Canteen Service, representing as it does, the acme of development of automatic merchandising, is a business of headaches and small profits.
>
> "This is not a complaint concerning the conditions under which we do business. We recognized them before we founded Canteen. . . . We recognized that the reason the vending field had been in such ill repute, prior to the entrance of Canteen, was that for over 100 years the opinion had prevailed that this was a business of fantastically high profits from a tiny investment."

It was not easy to separate Americans from that pet theory; it still keeps rearing its ugly head, and Nat Leverone is forced to keep swatting it down with well-aimed verbal punches.

When Canteen began to expand nationally, the old

onus tried to hitch a piggy-back ride into the new territory. "The 'get-rich-quick' opinion of automatic merchandising" made Canteen appear to be "a literal gold-mine" to politicians who still thought of coin-operated machines in terms of gambling and stale, dwarf-sized merchandise which had been rejected by conscientious wholesalers.

It was no business for faint hearts or amateurs, Mr. Leverone recalls:

> "Automatic Canteen Company of America, then pretty much of a 'one-man show,' was faced with seemingly insurmountable obstacles in its struggle to build a respectable and respected industry of vending. We were handicapped in most states by discriminatory tax laws which usually lumped all coin-operated devices in the same category as the gambling machines the laws aimed at. We had a long and arduous fight to gain recognition for vending as the legitimate and ethical retailing business which we had developed."

Canteen looked successful. Of more importance, local politicians reasoned, it must be making a high rate of profit on its sales, just as the racketeers did in the old vending machine days. This Canteen outfit should be a handsome source of new tax revenue—some officials may even have rubbed their hands in anticipation.

Leverone paints a vivid word picture when he describes them as "public officials and legislators, who, in their frenetic search for additional sources of revenue, favor discriminatory taxes on merchandise vending machines."

Except for the fact that a coin was put into a slot, there was no similarity between Canteen and the old hoodlum-run vending machine racket. In the first place, you would always get your money's worth out of a Canteen vendor if you put a coin into it, and that feature alone lifted it into an entirely new category. The people who wanted to levy oppressive or confiscatory taxation did not realize that Canteen was continually investing large sums of money in the improvement of the company and its methods of serving the public. Engineering and product research laboratories had been established. Built on "a tiny fraction of a cent," Canteen was being given the same development treatment as any solid business enterprise. As a national organization, Canteen was contributing to the growth of cities all over the country. Work was given to people locally, as well as nationally. Employees were trained and required to be good citizens in their own community, and to exercise an active sense of civic responsibility.

Nathaniel Leverone, looking back, was to describe the ascendancy of the Automatic Canteen Company of America to its position of prominence with these words:

> "Canteen has attained its position in the automatic merchandising field as a result of intelligent management and hard work combining to bring about the fulfillment of a vision of SERVICE. Its future was assured by the building of a strong management team of top people in every field."

Obviously some more "educating" needed to be done among unenlightened politicians who thought

that Automatic Canteen was a business of "easy" nickels and pennies, operated by a gang of cheap punks. Tense as the situation undoubtedly was, it must have had its humorous aspects when tax-happy officials ran smack into Nathaniel Leverone. Vending machine characters were generally pictured as shifty-eyed, uncouth fellows, with Mafia connections somewhere in the family. And what did they get? They got a Dartmouth "Fiji," a Phi Beta Kappa, a gentleman who could out-talk any six of them with sparkling fluency, and stay on his feet for forty miles without getting winded if necessary! On top of all that, he had plenty of good old New England pioneer spirit; and he was determined to pioneer the new era of honest, efficient vending service, in spite of any politicians who threatened to impede the progress of the company.

The Canteen man's arguments were straightforward and logical. "You want to tax on each individual Canteen," he said. "Would you tax a grocery store on each item they sell? We are just like a retail store, except that we do not have our merchandise on shelves in one store, but spread all over the city in various Canteen locations."

Nathaniel Leverone made it clear that Canteen was not meant to be a casual treat dispenser, or a mechanized bandit. It was designed to perform a serious, necessary function in the daily lives of active Americans. This was a business, not a racket, Mr. Leverone insisted; and it should be treated with the same respect as any other reputable business. Governors, mayors and legislators listened when Nat Leverone stated his case for Canteen:

"We render an important service in making available top quality products on a 24-hour-a-day basis. . . . in locations and under conditions where personal service would not be practicable nor profitable. In fact, our policy always has been, and is, to install Canteens only in such locations where they supplement but do not supplant nor compete with retail stores. Because our 'salesmen' are mechanical, instead of flesh and blood, is no reason why we should be penalized by taxation not levied on other retail outlets."

Discriminatory taxation would be fatal to Canteen, a business that was struggling to get a firm foothold in spite of the depression and was opening up much-needed areas of employment for hundreds of eager, ambitious Americans every day. "It must be remembered," the head of the company emphasized, "that we pay the same federal, state and local taxes that all businesses do, and maintaining our operations at a profitable level is a continuous fight for maximum efficiency . . . because only by keeping efficiency at its highest peak can that narrow profit margin of a tiny fraction of a cent per transaction be held. If our phase of retailing were to be burdened by special additional taxes not levied upon other retail merchandisers, our picture could easily change from that of a profitable business to a losing venture."

Characteristic of some semi-humorous highlights was Canteen's experience in a state which passed a law taxing one store $10, up to ten stores in a chain $1,000 apiece, and up to one thousand stores $10,000 apiece, designed to protect the small store owners

against the competition of chains. They decided to apply this tax against Canteens, of which there were 3,900 in the state. Nat Leverone contacted a fellow Phi Gam who was an official in that state, and together they found the loophole that saved the Canteen operation there. The law required that the license provided on payment of the tax, which measured fourteen by twenty inches, be displayed in a prominent place on the premises. Since the early Canteen models measured four inches deep, four inches wide and forty-eight inches high, it would have been impossible to find a prominent place to display the license, and they were spared that tax without argument!

In addition to an array of reasonable, forceful arguments, the Chicago man had a background of impressive associations because of his involvement in projects dedicated to the betterment of his great home city. Instead of being an old-time vending machine operator, he was an all-time member of the Chicago Crime Commission, the Better Business Bureau and all those other groups and organizations with fellow-members among the most prominent citizens everywhere.

Cloudy as the situation often seemed at that time, the success of the Canteen venture was later credited to the fact that "some big men thought big thoughts about a business that has always been manned by small men, thinking petty thoughts." Nathaniel Leverone was the chief spokesman for those "big thoughts."

The Canteen people knew that they would have to keep waging a vigorous campaign to teach people the difference between unscrupulous antique vending con-

traptions and Automatic Canteens, and they could see how that state of affairs had come about. It is rumored that one of the first vending machines in America was a gadget that dated back to 1846. For a dime, it sliced off a plug from a bar of tobacco. Perhaps that contraption was on the level, but there had been a great many "cheaters" during the following seventy or eighty years. It takes awhile to live down such a well-aged reputation.

Tax-hungry officials were not the only ones who tried to muscle in on the Canteen enterprise. Nat Leverone's experience with the Chicago Crime Commission had taught him how to deal with vending machine racketeers who mistakenly thought they all belonged to the same "club." From the vantage point of the Crime Commission and Better Business Bureau, he continued to fight "tooth and nail" with gambling-machine racketeers who gave honest vending machines a black eye.

Most new businesses, with all their struggles and unexpected strains, do not encounter the double handicaps that Canteen faced. Developing and promoting a product or a service is a challenging occupation in itself, but Canteen also had to keep shadow-boxing the tag-along infamy of the old vending age and the discriminatory treatment that it carried with it. In their efforts to guard "that tiny fraction of a cent" against prohibitive taxation and keep the company solvent while it was getting firmly established, Nathaniel Leverone and the other Canteen officials must have sometimes felt as though they were taking a long, long

walk on a cold, cold day. It was a good thing that Nat Leverone thrived on that kind of exercise!

Experience was making it possible for the company to divide pennies, nickels and dimes up into percentages to ascertain what percentage it could pay for the product, for commissions, for servicing, for research and advertising, for slug losses, for equipment, for taxes and for all the other expenditures necessary to the functioning and growth of a solid, expanding business concern—and still manage to stay out of the red.

Canteen continued to experiment with improvements to make the word SERVICE meaningful in every sense, to live up to "the code of ethics which guarantees the customer fair value." No detail was too trifling to be given serious attention.

The larger the company grew, the more zealously it stressed the principles of proper sanitation, starting with the neat uniforms and carrying cases of the Canteen service men to the frequent cleansing of peanut dispensing machines. Peanuts were packed so they would not come into contact with human hands from the time they left the processor's plant until they slipped out of the machine into the customer's hand. Canteen officials safeguarded their candy bars by equipping manufacturers with special machines to seal the confections inside their wrappers before they left the factory. Canteen storehouses were cool, clean, and free from vermin.

The growth of Canteen, during the depression years, when so many other businesses had retrenched or given up altogether, was a source of amazement to people "on the inside." To people "on the outside,"

Nat Leverone was still a source of amusement when he kept predicting that the Automatic Canteen Company would some day be listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

By 1933, Canteen was celebrating more than three years of being able to stay on its feet and keep growing. The city of Chicago was preparing to celebrate a slightly more formidable milestone in history, and perhaps Canteen would be a part of it.

Chapter Eight

Canteen Feeds 'A Century of Progress'

In 1833, a small settlement on the southern shore of Lake Michigan was incorporated as a town. It had a population of six hundred industrious souls. By 1893, Chicago celebrated its status as a major city by holding a World's Fair. Many Americans enjoyed the thrill of examining a "horseless carriage" for the first time at the Chicago World's Fair of 1893.

Chicago kept thriving. Some of the greatest social welfare reforms in the history of mankind had their origins in the Lake Michigan city. The metropolis became a mighty stockyards, railroad and manufacturing center, and it did not neglect to provide nourishment for the mind and the spirit. Hundreds of churches and temples began to mark the skyline of the city. The Chicago Public Library kept adding dozens of branches and sub-branches to its system. Internationally renowned are the Chicago Symphony, the Chicago Opera Company, the Chicago Institute of Fine Arts, the Adler Planetarium, Jane Addams' Hull House, and a long list of distinguished educational institutions.

In 1933, Chicago was ready to celebrate A Century of Progress, with amazing scientific, artistic and industrial marvels from all over the world on exhibition. There were sounds of great motors roaring and small engines purring, demonstrating new engineering marvels. There was the cacophony of brass bands blaring at calliopes, and there were lights and colors and fireworks bursting into flame. Barkers were crying their wares, sword swallowers were sliding shiny blades down past their tonsils, and 1933 versions of Little Egypt were doing a bit of a dance along the Midway.

All of the leading citizens of Chicago took a deep, hard-working interest in the Century of Progress International Exhibition. They wanted it to be the most splendid World's Fair ever presented, an event to be remembered for a lifetime. A former New Englander, from Keene, New Hampshire, probably had as much Chicago home town spirit and civic pride as any of the native citizens.

Nathaniel Leverone, serving on promotion committees and watching the drama of a great Century of Progress unfold, would study all the scientific displays and mechanical phenomena with an appreciative eye. He admired the American pioneering spirit, whether it produced something revolutionary or evolutionary to contribute to the well-being and higher standards of living of the human race.

As they had done at each world exhibition throughout history, the jostling throngs of eager visitors looked wide-eyed at the latest products of their generation, marveling that men's minds could reach such stupendous heights of inventiveness.

Automatic Canteen was moving along with the tide of progress. Endeavoring to give the public what it wanted had been a tradition-forming policy with Nathaniel Leverone from the inception of Automatic Canteen. The original vendors had delivered candy bars through a single mechanism; in 1932, Canteen engineers had been busy designing and perfecting a bright new model of the candy dispenser. Based on the constant ideal of service, it would enable the customer to get the candy bar of his choice with his first nickel!

In the intervening years, Canteen patrons have almost forgotten that there was a time when the customer took the first bar that came out of the dispenser, unless he had a friend handy to swap with him. The bars were full-sized, they were fresh and of superior quality—but what if you were allergic to chocolate? On the other hand, a chocolate-lover might keep getting cocoanut or caramel with the first three or four nickels. Selection was impossible.

Canteen wisely concluded that there was enough frustration in the world already, and decided to build a candy machine which would offer customers a choice of bars. They went to International Register Company with the project, and Arthur Woodward, its owner and an outstanding design engineer, developed the five-column machine with a capacity of sixty bars. With this machine, automatic merchandising reached a solid level of maturity. Mr. Leverone has noted the milestones in retailing development, achieved through gradual stages of metamorphosis—with barter coming first; then manual retailing service; then mail order,

in which paper was sent and merchandise mailed back; and finally automatic machine retailing, in which a coin is exchanged for merchandise on the spot.

The new five-column selective machines, which permitted the customer to choose his favorite among an assortment of five delicious candy bars, had begun to come off the production line in 1932, and were being installed and tested in some offices, factories, railroad depots and other standard outlets.

Then came Chicago's Century of Progress, with thousands of hungry visitors standing in line for food, when they would much rather have been viewing the exhibits.

Nat Leverone was close enough to the situation to realize that Canteen installations would answer a crying need and would furnish a fine business opportunity for Canteen as well. His suggestion was welcomed, approved, and endorsed with appreciation.

The new selective Canteens, modern automatic merchandising's proof of the vitality of a new industry that would not stand still, were installed on the vast grounds of the Century of Progress International Exposition. People from all over the country and the world were able to enjoy themselves, without hunger pangs contributing to fatigue.

Canteen scored a great hit with the Century of Progress. That the candy dispensers were desperately needed during the 1933 and 1934 Fair years is evidenced by the fact that sales took a tremendous leap upward.

Realizing that there was a demand for nourishing liquid refreshment on the fair grounds, Canteen con-

cocted a mixture of milk and Hershey's syrup. The concession was an instant success, with long lines of thirsty customers waiting for service.

Suddenly Mr. Leverone received word that the chocolate milk concession had been closed down. He hurried over to discuss the situation with the officer who had decided that dispensing chocolate milk was against rules and regulations.

"Well now, whom do you represent?" Mr. Leverone asked.

"The Park Commission."

The Canteen president went to a nearby telephone and started dialing. When the officer heard Nat Leverone calling the superintendent of the Chicago Park District by his first name, he removed his opposition to the chocolate milk drink immediately.

Among the millions of honorable and upright candy munchers around the country, there were bound to be a few moochers who wanted to see if they could "beat" the new Canteens. The engineers had to move like lightning when a customer discovered a way to push all the selections at once and get a complete assortment of bars for one nickel.

At the Century of Progress Exhibition in 1933, Canteen's engineers spent days trying to solve the mystery of empty machines and equally empty coin boxes. A sympathetic onlooker finally tipped them off. A man had attached a fine wire to a nickel and had kept lowering it into the coin slots and jerking it out again. Snippers were added to the other rogue-foiling devices inside the Canteens, but heavy losses

were suffered before the snippers were installed in machines all over the country. Successful machine-gyping practices spread faster than an epidemic, Nat Leverone has noted. "When somebody hits on a way to beat coin machines, the news travels from coast to coast in a flash."

With all the devices to safeguard Canteens, it has reached the point where it is cheaper to go out and earn a nickel or a dime than to waste time trying to beat the machines! Says Mr. Leverone, "We taught the public it could expect honesty from a machine with the word CANTEEN on it. We also taught them they'd better give us honesty in return, or they'd sure as shootin' get their coin right back."

The Canteen engineers have continued to experiment with new and improved models designed to keep the customer happy. The nut and gum machines, like the candy dispensers, are products of mechanical evolution. Enabling the customer to make his own selection has contributed to the popularity and the increased patronage of Automatic Canteens.

The Century of Progress Exhibition was a superbly grandiloquent gesture of defiance aimed at the lingering shadows of the depression. Canteen had moved forward with the same splendid spirit. By 1934, sales were close to two million. And that's a whale of a lot of nickels and pennies!

Improvements in operating procedure were constant, as Canteens kept receiving wide acceptance. In some of the huge industrial plants, one Canteen service man might be kept busy all day. He would start on his rounds early in the morning. By the time he had

serviced the last machine, the first one would need filling again. Service men would learn to keep alert for "taste trends," noting which candy bars might be more popular in one part of the plant than another. On a wider scale, this same "service" rule was observed in all Canteen operations, because sales varied in different localities depending on such factors as weather, advertising campaigns and consumer moods.

Records of sales had to be kept, in a business where every penny and nickel must be evaluated in terms of "that tiny fraction of a cent." A simple record card was carried for each Canteen on the service man's route. The card showed the route number, date of installation, location of Canteen and the name of the contact man. There were separate columns for candy, gum and peanuts, with space for the date of each servicing, the number of bars sold, the nickels or pennies received, the deductions, and the inventory. Duplicate records, in the office, provided a summary of the information by months.

Nathaniel Leverone looked with justifiable pride on the distributorships that were regularly being added to the Canteen roster. When it came to setting up operations in states where taxes remained too high or discriminatory, he revealed a shrewd talent for biding his time. Canteen would not be intimidated. The company wanted to grow, but it would only put down roots in soil that manifested favorable conditions for present and future productiveness.

Judging from newspaper accounts, Chicago took pride in Nathaniel Leverone and his business and leadership qualities, and Nathaniel Leverone returned

the compliment by continuing to interest himself in the welfare of Chicago. Even though the Windy City on Lake Michigan became his permanent home, his fondness for the New Hampshire of his youth did not diminish as he grew older. He has watched almost every Dartmouth-Harvard game since 1902, and has visited his native state for several weeks every year.

Almost anyone would conclude that the Canteen founder's hours of activity could scarcely be crowded into an average day, but he must have developed a second wind on those lengthy walks of his. In 1935, he would lend his good name and his amazing vitality to an area of business activity that a less courageous man would view with alarm.

Chapter Nine

A Grand National Story

Automatic Canteen was not the only coin-operated industry in the world. Reference has been made to other vending devices, and sometimes it has been far from complimentary. There were dispensers for soap, towels, combs, handkerchiefs, razor blades, matches, candy and miscellaneous items. Once in awhile, they would give the customer his full money's worth. Too often the machines would dole out cheap merchandise, or keep the coin when they were empty.

Whether they dispensed merchandise or service, business was poor. Vending machine people could not even seem to make a decent profit by collecting coins from machines that were empty half the time.

It was a shabby, miserable business—and what ailed it anyway? A few visionary-minded vending machine people started asking each other questions. What do those Automatic Canteen people have that we don't have? How about that Nathaniel Leverone—how did he figure out a way to make vending a respectable and

profitable business, while we flop and flounder around in it, year after year, never getting anywhere?

A few vending machine people with leadership qualities began making desultory efforts to organize for the purpose of appraising the business, probing its problems, and trying to achieve some measure of business dignity. It was another case of the fellow trying to lift himself up by his bootstraps; he couldn't get off the ground, and he couldn't figure out what was holding him down.

They might have decided they weren't big enough operators. If they were big operators, they would get together with merchandisers and people in their own line who were familiar with their problems. In 1935, there was a well-attended convention in Chicago, but it was not a very cheery affair. Everybody had brought his load of problems, yes—but nobody had brought any solutions. And that can be a very depressing state of affairs.

The occasion was the 1935 Coin Machine Convention under the auspices of the National Association of Coin-Operated Machine Manufacturers. These were honest men, sincerely interested in making an acceptable profession of the vending business. Nat Leverone recalls that they were discouraged, and he knew why. He had been through the mill of bitter experience himself. Over and over again, decent people had looked askance at the Canteen operation, because coin-operated dispensers were often considered part of a cheap, shoddy racket. Canteen was not affiliated with the Association.

In general, the vending machine business had been

kicked around by racketeers, shunned by nice people, and pounced upon by politicians. Nat Leverone knew why the Convention had all the boisterous spirit of a soggy piece of cabbage.

Many men have made many speeches throughout history. Few have had the impact and the power for good that characterized the speech that Nathaniel Leverone made at the Hotel Sherman in Chicago on February 19, 1935, at the request of the Association of Commerce and Industry. With only an hour's advance notice, he arrived at a time when optimism probably was at its lowest ebb.

"Vending Age" has described the founder of Canteen as "the outstanding leader in his field." To the assembled coin machine people, he was Mr. Success, a man who had been able to score a great triumph over the multiple handicaps in the business. They were anxious to hear if he could give them a word of hope or a bit of useful advice.

He could have begged off. The launching of Automatic Canteen and the vigorous effort to build up its reputation had been a tremendous operation. Surely he couldn't be expected to straighten out the vast majority of these other dealers and get them pointed in the right direction.

Nat Leverone did not waste time trying to dodge an ethical issue. He knew how frustrated and muddled many of the people in that audience felt, and he knew what he had to say to them. He talked at length, extemporaneously. A man who always seems to have his facts faultlessly arranged in his mind, he does not use notes. A verbatim copy of the speech exists only

because a court reporter happened to be present and recorded his remarks.

In his first sentence, this leading vending machine man said in effect, "I am one of you." His actual words were, "I am extremely interested in this business, just as you are, or I would not be here."

Then the Canteen man gave them the verbal benefit of his own experience. He took them back with him to the late twenties, to the time when a group of civic-minded men were discussing civic problems. The subject of automatic vending had accidentally been mentioned, and there had been expressions of bewilderment about the manner in which this great area of business activity had been "neglected, abused and injured in every possible way."

The vending people in that audience must have stiffened to attention when Mr. Leverone told them, "As we discussed the matter, we felt that this great industry had greater opportunities than any other in America, and I have not changed my mind to this day."

But if vending appeared to be such a promising industry, why weren't they succeeding at it? What had the Canteen man done that they had neglected to do? He told them of the decision that had sent him and his associates up the vending machine trail. "One of us said, 'Let us look into this matter, because it looks as if there was a tremendous opportunity for automatic vending because it performs a splendid service. After all, it doesn't matter whether it is this industry or any other, if you can perform a better service than others, you have the foundation for a real business.' "

With every sentence, the speaker was accentuating the bright potential of the most forlorn step-child in the merchandising family.

Nathaniel Leverone proceeded to describe the thorough manner in which the vending machine business was investigated all over the United States. They had turned the problem inside-out and upside-down, he said, querying manufacturers of vending machines, big and small operators of vending machines, and customers who dropped pennies and nickels into the slots.

Then came a summary of the cold, cold facts. Almost everyone associated with the vending machine industry, in any shape or form, agreed that "the vending machine business was virtually a racket, that it was dishonest, that the customer did not get honest value for his money." Merchandise was stale, scales were inaccurate. "In other words, the business was what one considers a flim-flam all the way through."

Had they not been men who were hard to discourage, Mr. Leverone declared, it surely was a business they would have passed by! But they were hard to discourage, and the problem kept looking more provocative as they went along. They would not be satisfied with only half an answer. "The information we acquired interested us immensely, because we saw that here was an industry in which one could render a better service through automatic machines than could otherwise be done and a profit could be made from so doing."

Here Mr. Leverone proved himself a staunch advocate of the American free-enterprise system. He de-

clared that he was not ashamed—and that no decent businessman should be — to make a profit from a worthy service rendered. "If one can render a better service than the other man, he is bound to make a profit from it. I still agree that what Emerson said was correct, 'that if you build a better mouse-trap than your neighbor, the world will beat a pathway to your door.' "

The lack of progress in the vending industry had destroyed incentive, the Canteen executive pointed out. But why had there not been more progress in an industry as old as vending? Vending machines had been in existence long before automobiles and great steel companies and mercantile chains had become part of the American progress picture. "But somehow or other, this industry, old as it is, was not started in the right direction."

Nat Leverone had decided that it would be a good idea to get some background information from leading trade magazine publishers in the vending machine field. The publishers were brutally frank as they noted the sordid facts that added up to a picture of failure in the vending machine business. These facts Nat Leverone passed on to his audience of vending machine people. Altogether, it was not an image on which a reliable industry could be built. The publishers had told Nat Leverone, "The men do not pay enough attention to their machines. The machines are not honest. They will take money when they are empty or out of order. The men themselves do not pay attention to the personal appearance of their service men. Some of them look like members of the great army of the un-

washed. They are unshaved, they are careless and slovenly. They are careless about their merchandise; they do not give full value for their money. If it happens they are operating games, all these criticisms still apply. The result is that the public feels that it is not an honest business. However, there are plenty of honest operators. In fact, most of them are honest, most of them are able, but they have not yet really seen the light. If something could be done to inspire them to organize, to get together, so that they could have faith in each other, they would accomplish much."

One of the publishers sent Mr. Leverone to interview one of the largest users of scales. If the future Canteen man had been puzzled, viewing the vending business from the outside, this "insider" was even more confused. This man, who was connected with one of the largest mercantile companies in the world, said that his company was pleased when the scale people put their penny scales into their place of business and paid them twenty-five per cent commission, which was clear profit. Then along came another scale operator with an offer of thirty-three and a third per cent commission, and the boast that his scales were superior. "We accepted that offer and soon after were offered forty per cent from another concern, and then fifty per cent and then finally sixty-five per cent, which is what we are receiving today . . ."

Nat Leverone had asked a penetrating question. "Does that seem like sound business to you?"

The mercantile man admitted that forty per cent would have been fair enough—"but this concern gets

all it can, and we will take seventy-five if they will pay it, and I believe they will."

This was the message that the Coin Machine Convention needed to hear, and Nat Leverone emphasized the point with eloquence. "So, here is one of the great troubles — poor judgment. You are not eliminating competitors when you offer stores exorbitant commissions. You are just eliminating yourself and bringing discredit on the business."

To illustrate the manner in which undercutting a competitor sometimes cheapened the image of the coin-machine man as well, he told of a visit with an official in another large firm. This man assured Mr. Leverone that his firm did not allow itself to be manipulated as the other one did. "We look into the record of each company with which we deal. We investigate the merchandise or service they are selling before we make a contract, and we want to know their costs. If they offer us a commission that is so big that we know they are going to lose money, we will not deal with them. Our firm wants to deal with the same group over and over again. We want to continue to deal with honest and efficient business people. One of two things must happen when a man cuts the price too low—either he will cheat to make up his loss or he will be forced to go out of business and we will be forced to deal with somebody else as a result."

With just two examples, Nathaniel Leverone had touched the most vital sore spots in the century-old vending business. Too often, the tricks of the trade had taken precedence over honor and dignity. "These location owners," the founder of Canteen pointed out,

"are tempted to take advantage of you because you offer them the opportunity. That is one of the greatest faults of the industry. These magazine men in your field know the troubles. They explain them through their columns constantly, and yet so often we overlook their excellent advice. I think that today there is a marvelous opportunity in this field because we can perform a service through coin-operated machines in a more efficient and more satisfactory way than it can be performed through manual service. In spite of it, still we face a country-wide prejudice; we face adverse tax legislation, we face dissension among our own groups, because they are not properly organized.

"You may wonder what the solution is. Well, I would say that the only solution is to organize along the right lines." The reader probably has been impressed with the fact that Mr. Leverone's remarks were, are, and will be applicable to any form of endeavor which seeks to rise above the level of apathetic mediocrity and develop a consistent success pattern.

The Canteen man spoke with optimism when he said that there should be some leaders among the convention group—"men who can direct your work of organizing properly and efficiently and after that is done show how to obtain public good will." How did Nathaniel Leverone know that there were sincere-minded leaders among the coin machine group in 1935? His appraisal of the situation revealed a neat blend of business acumen and a witty awareness of the caprices of human nature:

"I know that you are making progress," he said. "The fact that you are able to get such a group to-

gether here indicates that. I know that some years ago, to get a group of operators of this size together, you would have had to have the aid of a sheriff and a half a dozen deputies to do so. The feeling was not very kindly. Most operators looked upon their rivals as about as useless as a marriage license would be to a California jack-rabbit. I know that when I have talked to operators' groups in the past, I found among them anything but a friendly feeling."

Yet, he was optimistic. "Today this feeling is changing rapidly. There is a desire for unity of action. As I have said, out of groups such as this must come real leaders who, through constructive suggestions and intelligent direction, will bring this industry into fine repute. You have a good many men who have the ability to be real leaders and who are ready to help. All they want is your co-operation, and I am certain they are going to get it because you are awakening to the fact that it pays to play the game together."

Did Mr. Leverone have faith in the future of the vending business? In the following words, he voiced his dedication to a field of endeavor in which his was the outstanding example of superior achievement:

"I would like to quote a bit of advice I gave the president of one of America's largest railroads regarding business opportunities. I said to him, 'Your boy is out of college, and he is very bright, but if you are asking whether or not he has a better opportunity in railroading, which I think is now in a state of decadence, than in the vending machine business, I would say the vending machine business by all means."

He was using the words "vending machine busi-

ness"—a phrase that had made him flinch in earlier years. If he had recommended Automatic Canteen as a future career for a young man, it would not have been astonishing. But here he was, telling these woebegone, despondent vending machine people that the entire field was rich with promise for the future!

He tied up his package of firm convictions, faith and enthusiasm with a bright ribbon of hope and handed it to his audience with a magnificent flourish. "I think this is a great industry. I do think it needs leadership and I believe that we are in a business that is going to compare in twenty or twenty-five years with those other great industries that I have mentioned. With your help, there is not a question about it. With that help, we can make this business respected, and we can make the public have faith in it, so that when you attend your meetings, you can hold your heads a bit higher and throw out your chests a little bit farther and quite justly say, 'I belong to one of the best industries in the country and I am proud of it.' "

A number of times, in that significant address, Nathaniel Leverone had stressed the need for unity and leadership. Where could they find a man qualified to unite and lead them, a man who had walked that long obstacle course and knew its hazards and pitfalls, a man with the courage to travel it again on behalf of a multi-faceted, carelessly-operated, sometimes antagonistic collection of vending machine people who were strung out all over the nation?

Nathaniel Leverone had a talent for looking beneath the surface, for studying people and places and not missing a detail. He saw that antagonism was

sometimes the only recourse, the only small claim to pride, that this beaten-down industry had. If these people had compounded the injury by beating themselves down, it was no less of a pity.

The Canteen founder's 1935 speech provided the spark that later led to the formation of National Automatic Merchandising Association. Perhaps there were people who advised Nathaniel Leverone to steer clear of that business for his own good, just as they had warned him against launching Automatic Canteen. They might have said, "Oh, let them find their own way out of those swamps! If you identify yourself with them and some of them let you down, it will reflect on the good reputation of Automatic Canteen."

On Nathaniel Leverone's desk was a motto. "If, therefore, there be any kindness I can show . . . let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again . . ."

On September 14, 1936, a dozen vending industry leaders met in New York. The founder of Canteen recalls that he was on his way to New York City on the Century when he received a wire from Clinton S. Darling, a professional trade association manager, urging him to attend the meeting. Of the twelve men there, six became charter members of National Automatic Merchandising Association: W. G. Fitzgerald, International Ticket Scale Company; Nathaniel Leverone, Automatic Canteen Company of America; W. R. Fowler, F. and W. Products Company; Robert Z. Greene, Rowe Manufacturing Company; E. V. Morava, Mills Automatic Merchandising Company, and A. Schlafler, Peerless Weighing and Vending Company.

Mr. Darling, through whose persuasive efforts the group was assembled, was the Association's manager during its first twenty-five years.

At first Mr. Leverone, with his many other commitments, was reluctant to join, but Mr. W. G. Fitzgerald insisted that there was only one man in the industry who could head the organization. "If he will not accept the job, we might just as well stop right here."

Again the Yankee from New England bowed to the inevitable. "I finally agreed to accept the job as president in good faith, and if, at the end of the year they had lived up to what they had promised, I would be very proud of them."

The Canteen man remembers that unjust taxes were one of the greatest problems. As a united organization, National Automatic Merchandising Association started to put up a solid front against discriminatory taxes and legislative attacks. Because of his many speaking engagements, Nat Leverone had friends in all cities of the United States who could open doors in time of difficulty.

"Clinton S. Darling did an excellent job of digging out possible areas of trouble," Mr. Leverone recalls. Then the Canteen man would visit that locality and explain the operation of the business, making his point by repeating the story about the merchandise being spread throughout the city in containers, instead of being on shelves in stores. In most instances, appropriate taxes were assessed.

"As more and more people went into the vending

machine business, more and more problems developed, and we were not able to take care of them without an organization," Mr. Leverone has noted. "Canteen's eastern manager, George Pratt, was an unusually able man. We started using him whenever we could, and he was very successful in presenting the case and preventing assessment of unfair taxes. He was assisted as much as possible by the other officers of the Association, but I am certain that everyone would be glad to give George Pratt the credit for all the fine work which he did."

Mr. Darling was very busy, and later he had an assistant, Frank Newman, a lawyer. Mr. Leverone personally went out with Mr. Newman when unfair taxes were being considered. Mr. Newman later became Canteen's house attorney and secretary of the corporation, positions which he still holds.

There was also D. C. Letts, Mr. Leverone's assistant, whom he carefully trained. Mr. Letts had a fine understanding of tax matters, so he was used a great deal of the time to assist. "We did not at any time ask payment for the services of our men or for their expenses, from the Association or from the operators whom we helped," Mr. Leverone recalls. "In all cases, we had to hire an attorney to follow through, and it finally became too great a drain on our company, and would have been unfair. Mr. Letts devised a plan of having the local operator's organization pay one-third, Canteen one-third, and N.A.M.A. one-third, which worked out very nicely."

The welfare of the entire industry was the Canteen man's concern. Whenever a case came up, even

though it did not involve Canteen directly (as in the Dakotas, for instance, where Canteen never expected to operate because its business was largely in industrial plants), prompt attention was given to it. Members of the board of N.A.M.A. will recall that when some unfair tax measures were considered in cities in the Dakotas, the Canteen president insisted on sending someone up there to combat it. Referring to those earlier years, his comment was typical. "We needed to protect the best interests of all members of the association. The officers had excellent co-operation from operators of all kinds."

Year after year, Nathaniel Leverone was re-elected president of the National Automatic Merchandising Association. After nine years as the policy leader, constant advisor and guardian of the rights of the industry, he insisted on relinquishing the presidency of N.A.M.A. He had asked the vending industry to regulate itself, in the interests of fair play. He had introduced a plan of unity, service and integrity that affected every segment of the business.

The Canteen man's speech in 1935 will bear good fruit far into the future. Approximately twenty-five years later, in 1959, the former "coin machine" people were holding another of their conventions in Chicago. For quite some time, these conferences had been called the National Convention of National Automatic Merchandising Association, and there was a note of solid respectability about that name. Don't tamper with me, it seemed to say. I am now a first-class industry—accepted by the public!

A feature of the event was the re-publication of

Mr. Leverone's 1935 speech in "Vending Age," under the title, "A Look at the '60's from the Viewpoint of the '30's." Nathaniel Leverone, "active head of the world's leading automatic merchandising organization," was asked to review the progress that had been made since the years before the conception of N.A.M.A. His 1959 comments were added to the king-sized story:

"Many of the conditions which prevailed 25 years ago have been corrected by now, but a few of them, particularly the evil of unrealistic and exorbitant commissions offered by operators who cannot compete on the basis of the quality of their service, still exist.

"One thing has not changed . . . in fact, it has grown by leaps and bounds. This is my enthusiasm for the future of the automatic merchandising industry. The farther we progress, the greater the opportunities we can see, and we have reached the point where we can affirm what I prophesied a quarter of a century ago, "I belong to one of the best industries in the country and I AM PROUD OF IT."

Both the 1935 speech and the 1959 comments had ended on the same lofty note of respect for an industry that could rise to heights as yet unimagined.

There is another convention story on that page of material from "Vending Age" for November 7, 1959. In it are sentences that confirm the phenomenal progress that Nathaniel Leverone had predicted for the erstwhile "Cinderella" industry: "This is the one time during the year when all get together and once again meet each other under the most pleasant circumstances. . . .

"It is the time when every operator is king. When he is catered to by salesmen, representatives, distributors, suppliers, manufacturers and all others concerned with the rapidly expanding and tremendously progressive automatic vending industry. . . .

"It thrills the mind to realize that every nationally advertised, recognized product is, today, seeking to be vended through the automatic merchandisers which have won such international acclaim for the efficient selling they have introduced to the world. . . . Sales through vending machines are expected to reach and, possibly, even exceed the $3,000,000,000 mark this year."

It sounds as though the entire industry has come a long way up the trail since those despondent faces indicated the prevailing mood at the Coin Machine Convention in 1935. Yep, Sonny, mebbe this business has got railroading beat all hollow!

Chapter Ten

Willing to Serve

In addition to the ideals of honesty and fair play, the Automatic Canteen Company of America was founded on a word known as SERVICE. Undoubtedly it succeeded because Nathaniel Leverone thought in terms of service whenever he took a step ahead.

In his free hours, he did not walk away from duties and activities that might bear the label of "service." In one of his speeches, he said, "We must place the welfare of our entire country above any welfare of any party. We can only do that by being willing to serve."

In the Milwaukee Journal for September 22, 1938, a feature writer reported: "But Mr. Leverone just talks. He never 'speeches.' He talks about America and Calvin Coolidge's simple tombstone and all that that simplicity stands for." Nathaniel Leverone knew about the Coolidge veracity from first-hand acquaintance with the late president and his son John.

Many writers have attempted to describe Mr. Leverone's amazing dexterity with the English language.

The "Interfraternity Magazine" has said of him, "Brilliant as a jewel, sharp as a whip, that man Leverone was the past-master of the wise-crack unique."

Several years ago, Paul Gibson of WBBM, the Chicago outlet for CBS, waxed poetic in his reference to the effect that Mr. Leverone has on his audiences. "Mr. Leverone is very famous for the speeches he makes extemporaneously, knitting together words and phrases into musical cadence delightful to the ear and competent to create a photographic understanding of the things about which he talks. A combination of wit, imagination and logic can make a vocabulary an irresistible armament with which you can invade the minds of people, with which you can create reactions, with which you can establish the relationship you may desire . . .

"I am told that he can put things together as Michelangelo united colors, he can paint pictures in the eye of your ear so you can see what he is talking about."

Even when his job was introducing the main speaker, people kept coming just to hear Mr. Leverone toss phrases together in a manner spectacularly excellent.

When he was the featured speaker, his humor would rock his audiences, and his serious comments on the state of the nation and the world would stir them and sometimes inspire them to deep concern. Did they give him standing ovations, with thundering applause, because he always said what they wanted to hear? There was subtlety, but he has often chided his upright fellow-citizens for their apathy, their failure to get out and vote, their refusal to realize that

passing laws and giving money will not solve any problems. Saying that the country needs leaders, he voices his disapproval of Americans who quip, "Let George do it," when there are civic, service and other citizenship jobs to be done.

Nathaniel Leverone has always struck a note of stern dedication when he is discussing people who are most in need of service softened with humor and understanding. It is especially evident when he mentions young people or writes about them. Mr. Leverone is convinced that the solid ideals of American patriotism are not stressed in the schools, and he asks his audiences to do something about it. He advises parents and business people to be careful about the examples they set the young people of the nation. "A father insists on his boy going to church, yet he doesn't go. . . . He hears a businessman talk about the fine ideals in business, and in the same breath he hears the businessman bragging how he put over a sharp deal on somebody else." These are some of the homely truths he has voiced.

There is a special question that you want to ask a man like Nathaniel Leverone, a man who is noted for his integrity. "Is it difficult to be honest in the business world?"

"It is just as easy to be honest as it is to be crooked," he answers. Success, it is obvious, does not depend upon "sharp dealing," because Mr. Leverone is a very successful businessman.

With his sensitive awareness of the problems that face young people in this complex modern world, it is inevitable that their champion would try to give them

a great deal of the understanding and appreciation they might not be getting from other responsible sources. Honest, wholesome-minded young people can take pride in Mr. Leverone's opinion of them.

In referring to unhealthy juvenile behavior in slum areas, he has said, "It's not the fault of these children. Their parents were drunkards or brutes or thieves. It's not their fault that character wasn't bred into them by fine schoolteachers and fine ministers. It's our fault that we permit the slums, that we permit children to have no place to play except around dives and factory neighborhoods. . . . If the citizen is willing to understand youth and take his responsibility, crime will be cut down to where it should be."

In recent years, he has noted that all of the juvenile delinquency is not on "the wrong side of the tracks," and he finds "the dark side of the youth picture" acutely distressing. "One of the major problems America faces today is that of coping with the current wave of juvenile delinquency. . . . Lawbreakers now come from all strata of society, from all kinds of neighborhoods, from some of our 'best families' as well as from 'the wrong side of the tracks.'" These are the sort of stories that get the sensational headlines, Mr. Leverone points out. "A teen-age murderer is considered more newsworthy than a boy or girl who performs some outstanding act of good citizenship.

"But there is a bright side, and I speak from personal experience and knowledge gained from my seventeen years as chairman of Chicago Youth Week which have given me valuable contacts with representatives of the 95 per cent or so of fine young people

who are even more incensed about the juvenile delinquency problem than most adults are. Adults can view the problem in a detached manner, because, while its effects may touch them occasionally, they otherwise are not involved. The right kind of young people, however, resent the fact that too many adults apply the term 'juvenile delinquent' so loosely that it often encompasses everyone under voting age."

Nathaniel Leverone desperately wishes that all young people would dedicate themselves to being "the right kind of young people," and he has done immensely more than his share to encourage them by promoting playground projects, and by praising, advising and building up a fine program of scholarship assistance during his many years as chairman of Chicago Youth Week.

He has called attention to the worthy accomplishments of young people, pointing out that "many civic activities would be much less successful if it were not for the help of youngsters." He cites "Community Chest, church activities, school functions, and on down the line," as examples. Out of the Chicago Youth Week activities would come the noble-minded impulse to draw up the Codes of Conduct—a "sense of values" guide for young people—which has inspired the adoption of similar programs in schools all over the continent.

As a "working Christian" who was active in the National Association for Christian Leadership and would become its president in 1944, Nathaniel Leverone would naturally be interested in Sunday School attendance for young people. Even though it is neces-

sary to jump over a World War to do it, this appears to be a proper time to mention a special honor that came to Mr. Leverone in 1952. He was chosen to serve as chairman of National Sunday School Week, an office that is entrusted to an outstanding leader in some field whose participation not only lends prestige to it, but who also takes a dedicated part in promoting interest in the observance.

National Sunday School Week is sponsored by Laymen's National Committee, Inc., an organization of leaders in business, industry, government, education, religion and labor, and is "Dedicated to the proposition that America was founded on Man's consciousness of God, Man's daily labor and the fruits therefrom."

National Sunday School Week has been given nation-wide publicity in every news media, and tremendous support from business and civic leaders. Chairman Leverone, serving during the eighth annual observance, was deeply conscious of the co-operation he had. There were 215,000 Sunday Schools in the country at that time—training twenty-five million pupils through the labors of two million Sunday School teachers who hadn't said, "Let George do it."

In a letter saluting National Sunday School Week, President Harry Truman wrote to Chairman Leverone, "What this country needs is a revival of the spirit of old-fashioned religion." Philip Murray, president of the CIO, wrote Mr. Leverone that ". . . attendance at Sunday Schools of their respective faiths should be a weekly activity of all American boys and girls. The daily revelations of corruption in government reveal what appears to be an increasing lack of moral instruc-

tion for our youth." There were similar expressions of approval and support from Mayor Martin H. Kennelly of Chicago, Mayor Vincent R. Impellitteri of New York and many other national leaders.

In a short message printed for the occasion, Chairman Leverone emphasized the importance of Sunday School attendance. Entitled "Rebuild Character Into Our Youth of Today," he touched on many points that disturbed him, in a few choice words:

> "A truly great influence in making better Americans is the contribution of Sunday School Week.
>
> "It was founded by the Laymen's National Committee whose leaders were disturbed by the apathetic attitude of the average citizens toward lack of church support, corruption in government and the appalling breakdown in the moral code—all matters of most vital importance to our citizens.
>
> "By creating a greater attendance in Sunday Schools, out of which come most of our church members and many of the nation's great men, we will be able to solve a most serious problem—the lack of sufficient able and unselfish leaders in every line of endeavor—leaders with deep religious convictions, of unquestioned integrity, with vision and moral courage, who place the welfare of the nation above that of any group they represent. Such leadership must come from the churches through the Sunday Schools.
>
> "I urgently appeal to all public officials, to

leaders of all groups, to every individual who believes in God, to be active and vigorous in his support of Sunday School Week."

Mr. Leverone is a man who takes religion seriously. He even thinks about it when he isn't in church. Once when he was in Glacier National Park, he met another gentleman who was mutually appreciative of the magnificent scenery. For several days, they shared their hikes along the mountain trails. The chance acquaintance was very much interested in Nathaniel Leverone's knowledge of flowers and trees, and during their conversations, Nat said that he could not understand why the ministry did not use the actual examples of God's laws and wonders to illustrate the moral principles which they taught. The laws of nature are strong and unyielding, and if they are not followed, extinction results. Because the wonders and beauty of nature speak so eloquently, Mr. Leverone questioned why the church would not encourage its members to learn and appreciate that with which God has surrounded them.

When his friend boarded the train, he thanked Nat for the wonderful ideas he had given him, and he gave him his card. After the train pulled out, Nathaniel Leverone looked at the card and was flabbergasted to learn that his new acquaintance was an Episcopal Bishop in a large midwestern city. So Nat Leverone had been giving preaching lessons to an expert!

One of the great Chicagoan's major activities in the late thirties and early forties was very much in the service category. When he took on the job of straightening out the affairs of the Goodwill Industries of Chicago, an emergency situation existed—their building

had been condemned and another had to be financed. His continuing dedicated interest in Goodwill Industries is another case of helping people to help themselves. Mr. Leverone has never believed that handing money to people is the answer to their problems; he expects them to show a fair share of eagerness and sturdy initiative. He knows that most of them have it, even when they appear the most disheartened. If someone will encourage them and help them to feel that there is a place for them in the world of busy people, they will usually come through with flying colors.

The Canteen man, in his role as a conscientious citizen, is equipped to talk with authority about this great area of service: "This fine organization has, as its main objective, the utilization of the talents and abilities of physically handicapped people who are anxious to work and yet can find no place in industry. The representatives of the Goodwill Industries have been instructed in a sympathetic approach to the problem of the handicapped individual, and, through an understanding of the exact problem, have been able to render a greater and more understanding service by bringing out the confidence of the individual himself, and helping him to find the proper work classification. This is one of the services which, in my opinion, we must all be prepared to render."

Handicapped people in the Goodwill Industries do not have large incomes, but it gives them a feeling of satisfaction to know that they are making something that other people will want to buy and use. Even the name carries a note of inspiration—Goodwill INDUS-

TRIES. They are people at work! Many have developed skills that have led to better opportunities.

In much the same classification is Nathaniel Leverone's active interest in the Hadley School for the Blind and the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago. He knows that handicapped people have the same hopes and aspirations as people who are not similarly handicapped, and many of them are highly talented. Given training and encouragement, they can become useful citizens, and achieve the dignity of independence.

As director of the floundering Goodwill Industries in 1940, vice president in 1941 and 1942, and president from 1943 through 1945, the Canteen man shouldered a heavy load of responsibility. Nat Leverone has asked, "What is RESPONSIBILITY? Let us examine its definition. For, as is the case with so many words, its full meaning has all but been lost. Too often it is confused with 'authority.' Many people consider a position of responsibility as one which entitles them to ride roughshod over others . . . whereas quite the reverse is true. Consider the dictionary definition of RESPONSIBILITY as 'the capability of responding to the obligations established by moral law, or by ethical principles and ideals.' "

Even in the early forties, the chairman of the board of Automatic Canteen Company of America had a few other little items on his calendar of activities. He was president of Common Ground, the Chicago social settlement; and it is no surprise to hear that he was founder and a director of Junior Achievement in Chicago. He was chairman of the executive committee of the Chicago Outdoor League, a member of the board

of governors of the Chicago Opera Company, president of the Leisure Foundation of Chicago, a director of the Chicago Merchants and Manufacturers Club, chairman of the Ways and Means Committee of the Chicago Association of Commerce, an active member of the Union League Club, and president of the Interfraternity Club of Chicago which he had helped to found; he had served as president of Phi Gamma Delta Club of Chicago, Dartmouth Club of Chicago, and quite a number of other Chicago and national organizations. Nat Leverone was a guiding influence in many fields of endeavor, even two decades ago.

Of course, he was still an active official of the Chicago Crime Commission, president of the National Automatic Merchandising Association, and vice-president of the Chicago Better Business Bureau—all of which took a good share of his time. He was also traveling all over the country on speaking engagements.

With such a crowded calendar, did Nat Leverone ever run into any unlucky days? Unlucky days? Friday, the thirteenth, was perfect for signing contracts and arranging big business deals! Mr. Leverone had another club on his list. The Anti-Superstition Society, which he founded, operated as a gauntlet flung with gusto at the bugaboo image of the Evil Eye. When President Leverone called the Anti-Superstition Society to order, he pounded his gavel on a mirror. During his twenty-five years as prexy, he kept a large supply handy for breakage purposes.

The meetings of this exclusive organization have been held on the thirteenth floor of Chicago's Blackstone Hotel, in Suite 1313, at 6:13 p.m. of every Friday

the thirteenth in the year. Members file into the suite under a ladder with an open umbrella on top of it. The walls of Suite 1313 are decorated with caskets and skulls, complete with blinking eyes. The tables are decorated with thirteen candles each, and inverted horseshoes and tipped-over salt shakers. There are often thirteen tables with thirteen guests at each one. In a cage in front of the president at each meeting is a sleek black cat that leads a pampered life at the Blackstone, which shows that this is a lucky cat.

Where did Nat Leverone ever find thirteen times thirteen people who never cross their fingers for luck? The membership roster has boasted such distinguished names as Standard's Oil's Allan Jackson, General A. F. Lorenzen, drugstore magnate Charley Walgreen, George Rosseter, chief justice of the Chicago municipal court, John J. Sonsteby, and such famous flyers as Jimmy Doolittle and record-breaker Roscoe Turner.

The Anti-Superstition Society is not just a flamboyant stunt. "Life" magazine rated it full feature picture-story coverage, stressing the prominence of its membership. Its members are living proof that superstition is ridiculous.

The Milwaukee Journal, in September, 1938, described Nat Leverone as a man "who's climbed almost every mountain in the United States; visited every city in the Union over 20,000 people . . . and walks a minimum of six miles a day, including the four and one-half mile round trip between his home and his downtown office—in sun and rain, winter and summer."

The Canteen man's increasingly heavy speaking

schedule was a part of the service pattern of his life, and he was always as welcome as the flowers of May! His messages left his audiences gratefully enthusiastic. "The Independent," Kansas City's Weekly Journal of Society, said, "Nathaniel Leverone, director of Chicago Better Business Bureau, just to name one of his many vocations, was honored guest at the Chamber of Commerce luncheon on Wednesday at the Muehlebach and was he a knockout! Without once referring to notes and with all the poise of a seasoned actor, he tossed off sentences filled with substance and trimmed with velvet until his hearers must have said to themselves, 'Is there no limit to this man's variety?'

"His subject was based upon 'A Better Understanding' which contained vital pertinence to all he had to say, but if you ask me, I'd venture to bet that if Nat undertook to deliver a treatise on the subject of the letter 'x' his points would be so well and arrestingly taken that their source would seem to be no place but the tip of his fluent tongue. Indeed few visiting or local speakers at these meetings have delighted and at the same time so consistently edified his hearers as did Nat Leverone. . . ."

The Milwaukee Journal reported, "More covered with speaking dates than a lad's face with freckles is the notebook of Nathaniel Leverone. . . .

"Yet Mr. Leverone's profession is not that of making speeches. He's a specimen of that rare American fauna—a man who's made a success of business; who then devotes most of his time to you and me and the other guy."

The Philadelphia Rotary Club Weekly—and he is

a very active Rotarian—noted, "His subtle humor and sage philosophy combined to make an address which we will long remember."

The Streator, Illinois, Daily Times-Press commented, "Mr. Leverone stressed the point, and very properly, that the outside world is pretty much of a reflection of one's own personality and thinking. If one is kind, he will beget kindness and if he is generous in his thinking, life will be generous in return."

Captain R. R. M. Emmet, commanding officer at the U. S. Naval Training Station, Great Lakes, Illinois, sent this message of appreciation to Nathaniel Leverone:

"I have heard nothing but praise for the fine address you delivered to the members of the graduating class of the Service School at the U. S. Naval Training Station here on Monday, September 13. It was a source of inspiration to the graduates and to all of the officers who have had a part in their training."

The complimentary remarks on Mr. Leverone's wit, wisdom, subtle humor and sparkling oratory could go on and on indefinitely!

There is a warm sense of civic pride and interest in the Leverone family. Evidently Mrs. Leverone has difficulty saying "Let Georgia do it," although she insists that she is not the "natural born speaker" that her husband is. Currently Mrs. Leverone is a member of the women's boards of the following: University of Chicago, Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, The Three Arts Club, American Opera Society, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Arthritis and Rheumatism Founda-

tion of Chicago; she is a trustee of the National Society of Arts and Letters of Washington, D. C., and past president of the Chicago chapter of that organization; trustee of the Hadley School for the Blind, Chicago, and a member of most of the Chicago women's clubs.

She is listed as a "Patron of the Arts" in Who's Who, and carries the responsibilities of a true member of society in Chicago with great dignity. She is a warm and outgoing person, young of heart and in manner. A gracious lady with a delightful sense of humor, Mrs. Leverone's face lights with animation when she talks. She obviously has been a happy woman in her role as the wife of Nathaniel Leverone, although she still maintains her own attractive identity.

Chapter Eleven

Canteen Enlists

The years from 1935 to 1945 saw a period of continued growth in the Automatic Canteen operation. By 1937, while the company was still comparatively young, there were Canteens located in over 2,500 American cities. There were some setbacks that only served to teach the company new lessons in sanitation techniques. The Pittsburgh flood of 1936 posed a giant-sized problem. Several hundred of the machines were under flood water for days — the merchandise was ruined and the machines thoroughly fouled.

"How could the Canteens be reconditioned with absolutely positive disinfection?" Upon inquiry the Pittsburgh board of health declared there was one positive method—a cleaning with live steam under pressure and a specified disinfectant. Expensive as this was, requiring the complete dismantling, re-assembly and then refinishing of the equipment, it was done. A germ conscious city gave its reward in the form of greatly increased patronage. The old-time vending machine owners probably would just have swooshed them out with some weak soap suds. It was more prof-

itable in the long run to be known as a company that exerted every effort to safeguard the health of its customers.

Because they learned that worms were germinated in the old neglected peanut machines, the dispensers are dipped in an antiseptic solution every week. Employees are forbidden to touch any food in the vendors with their hands. This is a rule that is as old as the company.

Canteen was dispensing more than candy; it was dispensing valuable business information! A "Time" magazine story in 1938 was devoted to telling how Canteen's sales in the nation's factories had become "an unimpeachable barometer of business trends." If workers could afford to buy more candy bars, business must be better.

The engineers kept right on researching in the experimental laboratory. In 1940, a highly practical selective soft drink Canteen was introduced. Paper cups helped to reduce operating costs and eliminated the breakage hazards of glass bottles.

A story by Robert E. Bedinfield in the "New York Times" has noted that Automatic Canteen got its first major boost from the installation of the machines at the Century of Progress. "During World War II they got a second lift when they were recognized as invaluable morale-building influences in war plants and military establishments." The uniformed Canteen service men were passed through the lines without question, wherever Canteens were installed.

The servicing of military camps and bases showed Canteen's excellent ability to function smoothly in

times of stress. Because Canteen had nationwide connections, efficiently tied up with the national office and national supervisors, deliveries were made promptly and with businesslike dispatch in spite of the almost inaccessible locations of some of the training camps. The Canteen operators and service men were braced to cope with sudden upsurges of patronage, and they became adept at satisfying "a wide variety of demanding young appetites and preferences." Automatic Canteen relieved boredom and fatigue in more than one way; the commissions were used to purchase extra sports and recreational equipment.

Around the middle of December in 1942, Boris Karloff came to Chicago to record a radio appeal for salvage materials with Richard Bradley, radio chairman of the salvage drive. "Timely Events" featured a picture of Mr. Karloff with Mr. Nathaniel Leverone, who now had a new job and a new title: State Salvage Director of the Office of Production Management Industrial Conservation Bureau for Illinois. In the picture, Mr. Karloff was turning over his dagger-shaped letter opener to Mr. Leverone as his eerie contribution to the salvage effort. "Karloff's California farm has turned in several hundred pounds of iron and steel for the nation's scrap pile," the caption noted.

Mr. Leverone has commented on the flexibility of a Dartmouth education—it qualified him to be a first-rate junk man. He knew that the collection of salvage materials was a vital job—that it might be the means of keeping factories in operation and the war effort moving at top speed. It would be helpful in releasing

new materials for the war effort and providing substitutes if necessary.

Some of the items collected would have a special appeal to his sense of comedy. On the list were razor blades, old bird cages, and outmoded bustles. One day a grocer from a small village in Illinois notified him that he had a four-ton safe which he would be happy to donate. He explained that he had no further use for it for the simple reason that all the money he had could be "put into a tobacco sack."

Those were the days when housewives were even saving tin cans; and other waste materials were collected from homes, shops, factories, offices and wayside scrap heaps. Automobile "graveyards" were salvage treasure-troves.

Accustomed to setting up efficient enterprises, Mr. Leverone activated volunteer committees all over Illinois to collect waste paper, scrap metals, old rubber and other likely raw material.

Unswerving in his loyalties and faith in the younger generation, Nathaniel Leverone often spoke glowingly of their notable contributions to the defense cause. "During World War II . . . when I served as chairman of the salvage drive in Illinois for the War Production Board, it was the youngsters who showed the greatest enthusiasm and energies in collecting the scrap metal and other materials so vital to the production of needed materiel of war."

Nathaniel Leverone also served on the Army Council as chairman of the Air Force Committee, and he was a member of the executive committee of the Chi-

cago Commission on National Defense—in addition to all those other organizations and offices that would keep a dozen men more than ordinarily occupied during their spare time.

The Canteen operation felt the cramp and pinch of war-time shortages. The average citizen had to stretch ration stamps, and business people had to apply for priorities on materials to lubricate the wheels of industry. "Black market" profiteering was a part of the picture, and a businessman had to be considered above suspicion in order to obtain the supplies he needed to keep operating.

Nathaniel Leverone, with his reputation for integrity, was able to get priorities on candy, tires, gasoline and other items needed to stock the Canteens, and keep operations moving on the road and in and out of the plants and military installations. Canteens, recognized as necessary morale-boosters, were removed from "non-essential" industrial locations.

Once more the chairman of the board of Automatic Canteen went to the aid of the entire vending industry. He would accept no war-time priorities for Canteen that were not offered to his competitors. In assuming such a responsibility, he made a magnanimous gesture of faith and trust toward the entire National Automatic Merchandising Association, which was becoming a power on the industrial scene after Nathaniel Leverone had coached its members in the virtues of service, unity, and fair play. His generous attitude is especially impressive in view of the fact that he was actually building up "the competition."

As though there were not enough complications

with a world war in progress, a seemingly minor proposal threatened to disrupt the vending industry in the spring of 1942. During World War II, substitute metals were used for minor coins. The content of the nickel, which contains seventy-five per cent copper and twenty-five per cent nickel, was going to be altered to half silver and half copper. The machines of the entire vending machine industry would be affected. Americans would be given a coin that would be useless to them in the daily purchase of candy bars, soft drinks, milk, cigarettes, music and other necessities that they were accustomed to obtaining from vending machines. The new coin would not operate the million and a half vending machines and phonographs equipped with "eddy current" type coin detectors.

In the face of so ominous a threat, which might have dealt the industry an irreparable blow, Nathaniel Leverone took his appeal to Washington. The order to start casting the new nickels was due to go into effect at noon. At ten minutes before twelve, Congressman Charles S. Dewey of Illinois was delivering a "telephone oration" to the charming lady who was head of the Denver mint and had the power of life and death over those nickels.

He told her that it would not only antagonize the vending industry—he also mentioned the peanut and candy producers, the tomato and pineapple juice and soft drink manufacturers, the dairy industry, and all the other people, all over the country, who would suffer hardship to one degree or another. It would put the vending industry completely out of business, he

told her. After a morning of high tension, the old content of the nickel was maintained.

In 1946, Mr. Leverone retired as president of the National Automatic Merchandising Association, which he had founded and served with such high-principled distinction, and turned its top post over to one of the capable leaders who shared his high ideals. His interest in the future of the organization did not lessen; he continued to act as a director.

About that time, Nathaniel Leverone became a director of Alliance Francaise de Chicago and would later become its president—a fact which might have surprised his high school French teacher.

It could be said that Mr. Leverone enlisted and served beyond the call of duty, as a Christian soldier during World War II. Mr. Leverone officiated as chairman of the Chicago Sponsoring Committee of "Bibles —Not Bombs—for Tomorrow's World," in which funds for eleven million Bibles were collected. Printed not only in English but in thirty-four other languages, they were distributed to our own men in the armed forces and in prison camps, to people of the liberated areas, and even to German and Japanese prisoners in their native languages. "Many of our most patriotic citizens feel that greater good will result from placing Bibles in the hands of these people now when they hunger for them than any other single thing we can do," Chairman Leverone declared.

As a founder of International Christian Leadership, he acted as a director from 1940 to 1942, and as president from 1944 to 1950, persistently demonstrating and voicing his belief that Christian citizens should be

ready to step forward and be counted as Christian leaders.

There was a saying during World War II that "There are no atheists in foxholes." In instituting the Breakfast Prayer groups within the International Christian Leadership organization, in 1944, Nathaniel Leverone was arousing his fellow citizens to the conviction that they should remain prayerfully conscious of their religion after they got out of those foxholes, and out of all the other tight and anxious corners into which the war had thrust them.

In an issue of the National Committee for Christian Leadership News Letter which features a story about NCCL President Leverone, there are many items about active breakfast groups — including the ones in the U. S. Senate and U. S. House of Representatives, with members from both parties attending.

Of special appeal is a short article about a new breakfast group in Baltimore, Maryland, which had met at the Anchorage, the Y.M.C.A.'s home for seamen. "The Reverend C. E. Seymour, blind pastor of the Foundry Methodist Church, was guest speaker at the first meeting, recited the first psalm and discussed the importance of religion to happiness. The audience was composed of thirty-six seamen of many nationalities—American, Chinese, Dutch, Greek and Russian. . . . Mr. Thomas Burfoot, night-clerk at the Anchorage, is chairman of the group."

In the splendid article entitled "Our President, Nathaniel Leverone," the Christian leadership ideals of the gentleman from Chicago are discussed:

"Nathaniel Leverone through his faith in the power

of Jesus Christ, his vision for a better nation built upon communities founded on Christian fellowship, and through his down-to-earth practical approach is primarily responsible for nurturing the Christian Leadership movement from its early infancy to the present. His leadership in connection with the National Committee for Christian Leadership program has inspired outstanding leaders in many phases of our community life to meet together periodically in Christian fellowship to find the better way of life, both individually and collectively. . . .

"Mr. Leverone says: 'The solution to all human problems lies in the character, faith and ability of those who try to solve them. Dynamic action under God directed in line with Christian principles is the foundation of leadership on the highest plane. A leader is a person who assumes responsibility. A Christian is one who is identified with the Lord Jesus Christ and led by His spirit. Christian leadership is in great demand everywhere. We are here to recruit men for Christ and to cultivate Christian leadership. This must not be lip service only. With courage and boldness we take our stand and in mutual helpfulness raise the standard and invite men everywhere to follow Christ.' "

In the course of his Christian Leadership endeavors, Mr. Leverone did not hesitate to point out that politicians, even those in high places, sometimes were not motivated by God-fearing principles. Perhaps that was the reason why the Hon. Everett M. Dirksen of Illinois stood up in the House of Representatives on March 20, 1946, to make a statement that later was

entered in the Congressional Record. If Mr. Leverone has a rival for fluid oratorical delivery, it would be the Hon. Everett M. Dirksen from his home state whose remarks are printed in full because it is difficult to find any sentences which are insignificant enough to omit:

"Mr. Speaker, sometime ago a member of the House made reference to a certain group called the National Association for Christian Leadership and spoke rather ungenerously of one of the leaders of this organization, namely, Mr. Nathaniel Leverone, of Chicago.

"I have had some acquaintance with the work of this association and have attended a number of its meetings. The observations which were made on the floor of the House a few weeks ago prompted me to look even more closely at this organization and its objectives and I became even more deeply impressed with its work and with its purposes.

"It is composed principally of businessmen and men in public life. It embraces people of every faith and creed. It is a group that has sought to appraise the problems of the world and of our own country impartially and unselfishly and to seek a remedy for the ferment, the unrest, the bewilderment that exists in the world today. It is devoting itself to a return to religion, to a revitalization of faith, to the application of spiritual values to our problems, and to a recapture of those values which are so indispensable to a reordering of the world and the achievement of peace both in the world and at home. Never has there been a need for such unselfish service as that to which the

National Association for Christian Leadership has been devoting its efforts and resources.

"One of the leaders of this group is Mr. Nathaniel Leverone of Chicago. He is an outstanding businessman who is held in highest esteem in his community, his state, and in the nation. For years Mr. Leverone has given so freely of his time, his vast talent, and his resources to this work and to a host of other philanthropic endeavors. He served so long and faithfully as president of the Goodwill Industries in the interest of the underprivileged. He served as president of a group known as Common Ground and in that capacity became so well and widely known for his philanthropies.

"Even in the field of unselfish and unrewarded public service, his name stands high. During the war he headed the Conservation Division of the War Production Board for the State of Illinois and under his skillful direction the conservation drives for materials of all kinds that were so essential to the war effort achieved a monumental success. He served as a member of the State Appeal Board under the Selective Service System and performed a notable work. He was also designated as head of the Air Corps Recruiting Division for Illinois and the results achieved speak so eloquently of his labors in this field.

"I have known Nathaniel Leverone intimately for a great many years and can testify not only to his patriotic and unselfish devotion to his country and his interest in the well-being of his fellow men but also to the high esteem in which he is universally held. This nation can in truth and in fact be grateful for

men like Nathaniel Leverone who so clearly perceive the problems of the day and then so willingly and unselfishly devote themselves to those spiritual and moral endeavors wherein we may find the only true and enduring remedy for our difficulties. Because of this I felt quite distressed over the thoughtless and unwarranted observations which were made some weeks ago on the floor of this body by one of our colleagues."

In his sincere devotion to Christian principles and good citizenship, Nathaniel Leverone has always been a man who speaks his mind—and not only on the subject of politicians. George Murphy, in "Chicago Profiles" in the Chicago Sunday American, said of him, "In his own rigid code, Leverone can be uncompromising. He is capable of standing up before the American Legion, with the purposes of which he is in complete harmony, and telling the boys:

" 'Don't be a pressure group for yourselves alone. Make sure in every issue on which you take a stand that you are acting for the best interests of all the people in the country.' "

Even before the close of World War II hostilities, Nathaniel Leverone began to worry about the placement of returning veterans in the field of industry. He had a message ready, in "Personnel Digest" for September-October, 1945, which featured a cover picture of Nathaniel Leverone, Automatic Canteen Company of America, chairman of the board. In "The Veteran . . . and Industry's Answer," Mr. Leverone warned, "Our men, when they come HOME, want a JOB; the right job, not coddling nor sympathy." He pointed out the danger to our AMERICAN BUSINESS

IDEALS, and commended the National Association of Personnel Directors Veterans' Placement Committee for the work it was doing.

There is much food for thought in one of the first paragraphs of Mr. Leverone's article. "This is a challenge!—and we cannot afford to take chances that those who won the war will lose the peace. Jobs must be available. . . . If we fail in this, political blocs will be formed which ultimately will defeat American business ideals. Re-employment of veterans must be accomplished through the cooperation of private business, government and the general public or a political swing to the left can be expected."

Mr. Leverone pointed to the dynamic new areas of industry that would soon be opened up. "New uses for pre-war products have been explored and progress has been made in converting items used exclusively for war — to peacetime civilian uses. Each of these means more JOBS. . . . These new materials and inventions will contribute to the establishment of years of prosperity." He cited the fields of plastics, electronics, frozen foods, radar and air-conditioning as examples.

The spokesman for Canteen declared that aggressive management does not view the return of the veteran as an alarming prospect, but there were many adjustments that would need to be made. Industry would have to put itself in the place of the veteran, reading his mind and gauging his physical and mental capabilities—because the man who had gone out to fight for his country would very likely come home a quite different man.

"Industry," Nathaniel Leverone noted, "should look to itself and not seek government subsidies to underwrite their training programs. Every practicable scientific tool of selection and training should be utilized. . . . It is important that the right man be placed in the right job for which his military and civilian experience, his abilities and interest, best qualify him." This was how the peace must be won, in the interests of the men and women who had fought to win the war.

Nathaniel Leverone was especially alarmed about the fact that "Unscrupulous men—harpies if you wish —already are planning to defraud returning service men." Unwary veterans who wanted to set themselves up in business would be the prime prey of manipulators who were posed to pounce, with advertisements of this type: "War Veterans! Earn Big Money. Operate Vending Machines—huge monthly profits. Get in the field today!"

Leverone urged chambers of commerce and business and industrial organizations to be on the lookout to advise veterans on prospective business enterprises. In many cases the veteran had neither the background nor the experience to assume the many-sided problems which the proprietorship of a business would present.

The vending machine business, Nathaniel Leverone knew from experience, was especially hazardous for amateurs. "We have plenty of jobs in the field for veterans—but it is a cruel hoax to take their money and war bonds under the pretense that they can make huge incomes quickly in a so-called 'easy' business."

Mr. Leverone questions some of our foreign aid

programs today, in light of his experiences before World War II was over. When he was acting as a presiding officer at the San Francisco conference in 1945, he was dismayed to hear United Nations Charter delegates start their speeches with highly idealistic sentiments about world peace, and gradually work their way around to requests for "spoils of war" in the form of expanded territory. When Mr. Leverone addressed the group, summarizing the points that had been dealt with, he pointed out that selfishness seemed to have taken precedence over brotherly love. The Communist delegate stalked up in a uniform that Mr. Leverone says "appeared to have been slept in," and announced that he did not understand. Mr. Leverone adjourned the meeting.

If each nation would base its world philosophy on its own traditional religious and moral precepts, Mr. Leverone believes that international understanding could more easily be accomplished.

Chapter Twelve

His Prophecy Comes True

While Canteen was continuing its war-time expansion program, pioneering new areas of service on many fronts, its engineers were experimenting to produce a hot dog machine that would cook a frankfurter in fifteen seconds, slip it into a bun and deliver it down the chute to a customer. And, hot dog, they did it!

By 1943, Canteen sales had zoomed to $14,000,000; and the engineers were designing sandwich vendors that would provide variety for workers who craved mid-morning and mid-afternoon snacks. Those two statements are interrelated. Much of Canteen's income was being poured right back into the company for experimental work on new equipment and research. Before the war was over, Canteen had developed a coffee vending machine that would serve coffee instantaneously, with or without sugar and cream.

August 5, 1946, was a splendid day in the history of the Automatic Canteen Company of America! That Canteen was being operated on the same principle as any major industry would never again be questioned

in financial circles. Automatic Canteen's stock was listed on the New York Stock Exchange; and Mr. Emil Schram, president of the stock exchange, saluted the event with an often quoted declaration:

> "Mr. Leverone, our investigation showed that you have taken an industry that was once considered a racket, and transformed it into an ethical and important service that is a vital segment of the retail field. You pioneered honest machines and honorable business practices in that field. If anyone had told me fifteen or twenty years ago that the New York Stock Exchange would ever list the stock of a vending company, I would have thought the idea insane."

Aiming at a high ideal of SERVICE, Canteen had removed vending from that old classification. By 1950, Mr. Leverone has pointed out, it had invested more than $20,000,000 in all types of Canteens. More millions were spent in engineering research and mechanical development, to produce the utmost in sturdy, dependable Canteens. That was a lot of money to invest in a company in which the profits must be counted in a tiny fraction of a cent. Unfortunately, Mr. Leverone noted, there were still some public officials and legislators who retained a get-rich-quick opinion of automatic merchandising.

Periodically, the Canteen man has been required to go to bat for his industry. In the November, 1945, issue of "Magazine Digest," an article by Stanley S. Jacobs describes Mr. Leverone's attitude at that time. "The familiar 'one-armed bandits' are not vending machines at all," he says hotly. "Yet prejudice against the gam-

bling machines has resulted in unfair legal discrimination against legitimate machines which purvey nationally-advertised foods and merchandise." Even after Canteen was listed on the mighty New York Stock Exchange, the chairman of Canteen's board had to continue his "educating efforts."

Louis Leverone, Nathaniel's elder brother, had become associated with Automatic Canteen before World War II. He was elected president of the company in 1942 and vice chairman of the board in 1950. Industry wanted on-the-spot hot food service, and Nationwide Food Service was set up by Canteen to fill this need. It proved that the manual service aspects of Nationwide were not compatible. Since Louis was recognized as an outstanding food processor, he left the Canteen organization to take over Nationwide which operated as an independent corporation.

In response to suggestions from employees and plant personnel, Canteen kept adding more and more hot food items to its standard line of light snacks, candy and cigarettes. As one new machine after another took its place in the row along the walls of factories and offices, the idea of the Canteen Servinette evolved. Framed into one large wall panel, a neat, orderly display was achieved. With a fine variety of soups, sandwiches, sweet rolls, hot dogs, hamburgers, stew and chili available, workers no longer need to carry their lunches to offices and factories.

Canteen's diversification had grown to such an extent that it was vitally important that the Canteen organization represent the top research, engineering,

and administrative personnel—the most competent in the industry.

Engineering skills and millions of equipment dollars went into the careful development of each Canteen unit, and the end of the story is never in sight. Take the Canteen Coffee Service. "It looks simple, doesn't it? You step up to a Coffee Canteen, select the way you like your coffee, drop in a coin, and presto—there is your steaming hot cup of coffee, made fresh before your eyes." (They have Coffee Canteens in the most surprising places, like laundromats. And that makes good sense too, from the housewife's point of view!) The story behind that cup of coffee is not so simple. There were years of research, experimentation and field testing, to make the mechanism sanitary, trouble-free and dependable. The Canteen researchers continue working with coffee companies, searching for the most perfect blends and consistencies of coffee. Canteen is not easily satisfied.

Canteen officials are pleased with the latest Coffee Canteens, however. "Here's a compact unit and yet you have refrigerating and heating facilities. This was a development that was said to be impossible a few years ago." Now they can ask, "How would you really like your coffee?" The choices cover every taste —black, with sugar, with cream, with cream and sugar, and a separate button provides additional cream if it is desired.

In 1952, the Canteen service man's uniform took on a "new look." Eisenhower jackets replaced the old-style uniform coat, and the color became a neat and natty Cadet Gray. In that same year, "Lem" was

hatched from a creative artist's lively mind. A jaunty, grinning cartoon figure, he graces the tops of employees' information sheets and special plaques that are often awarded for service. He belongs to the Canteen employees. Dressed in the Canteen service man's uniform, with the word CANTEEN emblazoned on his cap, and a large badge reading "LEM E. HELP" on his lapel, he adds a note of cheer to the Canteen worker's day. The man who suggested the name, Lem E. Help, in a Canteen-wide contest, was James B. Ziemski of the Baltimore operation. He received a first prize of one hundred and fifty dollars.

Nathaniel Leverone and the associates who were responsible for the growth of Automatic Canteen concentrated on every possible side of the operation. The Canteen Quarterly was established and attained international recognition under the excellent editorship of Dick Burleigh.

Anyone who reads the "Chairman's Page" in the Canteen Quarterly for the Winter of 1952 will realize that Nathaniel Leverone has an absolute horror of the highway slaughter that is taken for granted, day after day. Already reprinted widely, even in Hawaii, the conscience-stabbing report on the situation is reproduced intact at the end of this book. More than ten years later, its message is more vitally urgent than it ever was. It should persuade every driver to add this sentence to his morning prayers: "Lord, do not let me forget that I may be a murderer before this day is over."

Guided by such a philosophy, Canteen drivers have been showered with awards by the National Safety

Council. In "Death Stalks the Highways," Mr. Leverone points out that "Among Canteen Company drivers, 417 drove an estimated 4,500,000 miles during the National Safety Council's past fiscal year (1951-1952) WITHOUT BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR A SINGLE ACCIDENT OF ANY KIND. And ALL Canteen drivers, who covered more than twenty million miles in the course of the year, drove their cars and trucks without causing a single traffic death." Mr. Leverone vigorously questions the whole idea of "accidental death" in highway accidents. "Slaughter on the Highway" should be read and debated in every high school in this speed-happy country, before all the teen-agers have a chance to turn into reckless, road-hogging adult drivers.

In 1955, Automatic Canteen bought fifty-two per cent of the outstanding common stock of one of its chief suppliers for four million dollars. Mr. Robert Z. Greene, president of the Rowe Company and a charter member of National Merchandising Association, was welcomed to the Canteen family, as the exchange-of-stock transaction was completed and approved by the board.

During all the years since its founding, Automatic Canteen had not entered the equipment manufacturing business. Its machines were produced to its specifications by companies who were equipped to manufacture dependable, sturdy and precision acting Canteen units. Canteen, however, was not the only customer of the suppliers with whom they did business, and delays in delivery of Canteens frequently were unavoidable. An article in Canteen Quarterly for the

Winter period of 1955 notes: "To prevent this conflict on the production line, Automatic Canteen Company made an exhaustive survey of the field with the plan of purchasing, if possible, a leading manufacturer of merchandising machines. The Rowe Corporation, with its competently managed modern plant and unusually capable engineering staff, proved to be the answer to Canteen's problem."

All the time, of course, Automatic Canteen had been building up its own "outstanding engineering department"—the Canteens it designed were proof that it was outstanding—under the direction of Vice President W. E. Richmond. The Canteen engineering department had shared many of its innovations of design with the automatic merchandising field in general. Because efficiency is endangered by producing equipment too fast and too cheaply, quality and durability had been stressed. Canteens needed to take a good deal of punishment, and still have a long working life. The Rowe merger story pointed out that, "Canteen pioneered the 'Engineering-for-Use' approach to vending machine production because a long, trouble-free life of vendors is most important." With the Rowe acquisition, Canteen had its own facilities to produce the type of vendors it wanted, straight from its engineering department into its own factory.

The Rowe Company, in addition to the manufacture of machines, had built up a huge retail cigarette vending business in the East. Rowe would continue to sell vending machines to other customers in the automatic merchandising industry, and it would have the benefit of any new devices that Canteen's engineers turned

out. This was a great step ahead for all of the vending industry, and Nathaniel Leverone's "Fourth Estate of Retailing" took on new stature.

The most prominent newspapers and magazines in financial circles saluted the Canteen-Rowe merger. "Barron's" reported, "A recent merger and various improvements in operating methods have brightened the earnings prospects of the Automatic Canteen Company of America, one of the leading firms in the vending industry. . . . Automatic's sales last year amounted to $47 million, while Rowe's gross revenues were $37 million, making a total of $84 million." An expensive item for Canteen, at that time, was the conversion to machines that would vend ten-cent candy bars.

On March 15, 1957, Louis Leverone died. In addition to his many enterprises in the business world, he had been intensely interested in the development of aviation and was active in civic and philanthropic organizations. In addition to the normal family relationship, there had been many strong ties between Louis and his younger brother—Miss Adams' portraits, the Free and Easy Club, Dartmouth, Phi Gamma Delta, and some social and business interests through the years.

Nathaniel Leverone had been given the paintings of Louis and himself, which had hung over the Adams fireplace for so many years on either side of the Cheshire Dartmouth Alumni Association plaque commemorating the original ox-cart journey through the New Hampshire wilderness and the founding of Moor's Indian Charity School which later became Dartmouth

College. Miss Adams had promised that Nathaniel Leverone should have the portraits when she died; both she and her brother, John Adams, lived to be more than ninety years old.

Of the family of six young people who had enjoyed the spacious home in Keene, Nathaniel and two of his sisters are living today. Dr. Louise—who never wavered in her determination to become a doctor—lives at Longmeadow, Massachusetts. Beech Hill has been kept in the family; it belongs to Dr. Louise who has never married and now is retired. The youngest of the Leverone children, Edith, lives in Indianapolis, and is the widow of F. C. Kroeger, a vice president of General Motors. Edith has two children, Marjorie, who is unmarried, and Barbara, who is married to John Gamble.

During the war years, the little Leverone daughter had become a young lady. Miss Meredith attended Ferry Hall at Lake Forrest, Illinois; Ogontz Junior College at Rydal, Pennsylvania, and Northwestern University. She enjoys playing the piano, is quite an accomplished singer, and is endowed with more than average artistic talent. Like her mother, she is interested in social and civic activities.

In 1959, Automatic Canteen Company of America introduced a surprising new service item. Actually, the merger with AMI—Automatic Music, Incorporated—was founded on the same principle as any of Canteen's other developments. You don't eat music, but it provides nourishment for the weary spirit. The new Canteen subsidiary would furnish background music for offices, factories, institutions and public meetings.

Serviced by the far-flung Canteen organization, it could be handled with all the dexterity of the other Canteen enterprises.

This was no small operation. Equipment would be available from AMI, and programming would come from a highly distinguished source—the vast background libraries of RCA-Victor Division of Radio Corporation of America. The complete production had been christened Customusic.

Customusic came as a surprise to many Americans, but it did not happen overnight. A report about its development explains, "As preliminaries to large scale installations of Customusic, Automatic Canteen Company followed its established policy of assembling the most able specialists and authorities on all aspects of the subject, and delayed the inauguration of intensive sales efforts until all phases were assured of top execution and performance."

Rumors about Customusic had brought inquiries from customers already enjoying Canteen services, but it was not released through the first two hundred Canteen distributors until its performance could be guaranteed with pride and integrity.

The "heart" of a Customusic installation, inside a neat cabinet, is a "hide-away" automatic record player which plays six hundred RCA selections without repeating, on any timing schedule suitable for factory, office or other locations where it is installed. As with the other Canteen units, high quality of design, performance and service possibilities were motivating factors during its painstaking construction. Now there would be music — Customusic — every-

where, to soothe the frayed nerves of workers, to furnish a melodious background for dining and conversation in restaurants, and to add a note of diversion to club activities in public meeting halls. Customusic would relieve the cold, stark elements of silence with mellow harmony.

Discussion meetings were held in which Canteen and Rowe management personnel learned the details of the new Canteen service. "Represented was a combination of talent never before assembled in the interests of providing background music specifically installed and programmed for the individual requirements of each account served," a report announced.

While Nathaniel Leverone was in the middle of making arrangements with RCA-Victor and preparing to help launch Customusic, he heard that the entire "coin machine industry" was under attack again. Once more he had to step forth in defense of legitimate automatic merchandising, in as recent a year as 1959. "Vending Age" devoted an entire page to his editorial, "Automatic Merchandising is NOT Racket-Ridden," which was a blend of history, humor, artistic appreciation and good business sense. He began:

"The Senate Rackets Committee should be commended for its effective efforts to root out racketeering elements of a segment of the 'coin machine industry.' All good citizens should applaud its aims, even though, to many, the main result to date seems to have been maligning a legitimate, ethical and vital service because people do not seem to differentiate between a much-needed if not essential industry, and a racket."

Mr. Leverone said patiently that he wanted to "reiterate, for the ten thousandth time, that there are many kinds of devices which operate by the insertion of a coin." In addition to food and other consumer merchandise dispensers, there are parking meters, luggage lockers, stamp machines in post offices and other "coin machines" that are taken for granted, Mr. Leverone pointed out; and he drew some analogies which he considered as ridiculous as lumping all coin-operated devices together. "A teller in a bank and a cashier in a gambling establishment perform almost identical functions of receiving and paying out money. Does this make a bank an illegal enterprise? Physicians . . . administer habit forming drugs under certain conditions, and druggists fill prescriptions calling for such drugs. Dope peddlers deal in the same type of drugs. Does this subject doctors and druggists to the same treatment accorded narcotics peddlers?"

Tracing the history of Canteen's growth as an enterprise of recognized integrity, Mr. Leverone named some of the major firms that Canteen has been serving for many years. "Can anyone possibly believe that an installation at General Motors, Westinghouse, U. S. Steel, Western Electric, Sears Roebuck, Macy's, or any other such company is obtained by a tough gangster who says in effect, 'Put in our machine or else . . .' ?"

Turning to the music field, Mr. Leverone conceded that "juke box" equipment might possibly be in the hands of the "fringe criminality" in a few areas, but he believes that coin-operated record players are "mechanical marvels," that their distributors deserve ap-

plause, instead of condemnation, for the entertainment they provide.

Here is a Leverone paragraph that verges on the poetic: "Music, as everyone will admit, is truly one of the finer things of life. All through the pages of history, music has filled an important role in the lives of men . . . inspiring them to patriotic fervor, rousing them to deeds of heroism on the battlefield, bringing the spirit of God nearer to them as it echoes through vaulted cathedrals, and lulling the infant to contented, secure slumber in its mother's arms. Never has there been such widespread interest in music as exists today. Hi-Fi equipment and the even newer Stereo sound systems are in tremendous demand and record sales are booming."

Mr. Leverone recalled the amazement of his friends when he had become associated with the vending business. He pointed out that he "entered" the field, but did not become "associated" with any racketeers who used vending machines as a front for gambling. "I proved that honesty, ethics, business principles and energy could elevate merchandise vending to what it has now become . . . 'The Fourth Estate of Retailing.' " Mr. Leverone concluded with a sentence that he wishes might be final:

"A coin mechanism does not make a mechanical device a racket."

The merger with Automatic Music, Inc., was the first step in Canteen's rounding out of its electronics division. Later in the year the Tonamat Company in West Germany was acquired, and in 1960 would come the ABT Company of Rockford, Illinois.

If the Rowe merger and Customusic had brought acclaim to Canteen, events of 1960 lifted the company to a new peak of prominence on Wall Street. One after another, in the space of a short two months, Automatic Canteen, "the giant of the vending industry," added three new members to its family. Chairman and founder Nathaniel Leverone announced the purchase of the ABT Manufacturing Company, Rockford, Illinois, on June 23. On July 8, Automatic Canteen acquired Commercial Discount Corporation. Nationwide Food Service, Inc., in which Nathaniel Leverone had once been interested, was welcomed back to the Canteen family on July 14.

After he had caused a flurry with the triple-threat announcement, Mr. Leverone said that he had conferred with twenty-five companies, looking for compatible businesses to add to the Canteen organization. "Because of the competitive nature of the industry and the trend of the economy," the Canteen founder explained that "Canteen was 'forced' into these acquisitions."

ABT Manufacturing Company, he told a reporter, "rounds out Canteen's electronics division, and marks another step in Canteen's program of integrating its manufacturing operations. It also provides Canteen with the electronic coin-and-bill-changing components and control devices which are essential parts of today's modern vending machines. In addition ABT brings to Canteen prototype models for several important new vending machines."

Mr. Leverone was especially delighted to demonstrate the way the ABT "bill changer" worked. His

dollar bill started the machine whirring, and two quarters, four dimes and two nickels dropped into the slot. The Canteen man was looking into the future when he mentioned the endless possibilities of the machine —"in department stores, where a $5 or $10 bill would be accepted and evaluated by the machine, the desired product dispensed, and the correct change returned . . . and for many other currency handling jobs, and several banking operations."

Mr. Leverone had tested the ABT "bill changer" with other currency, crumpled and old bills, and even newspaper cut to the right size; but it stubbornly refused to work on anything but good American money. A legitimate bill, no matter what the condition, always set the machine whirring pleasantly. The engineers, of course, are braced for the day when someone might somehow figure out how to trick the machine. "It's an endless part of the business."

The second Canteen acquisition, Commercial Discount Corporation, was necessary to Automatic Canteen's diversification program, Mr. Leverone said. It would give the company a means of financing sales of the manufacturing divisions, including Rowe vending equipment, AMI automatic music machines, and ABT bill changer currency machines. "This need is evidenced by sales of Rowe equipment, which have increased some two hundred per cent since Rowe was acquired by Canteen in 1955," Mr. Leverone said. When he had gone looking for compatible businesses, there was a pattern in his well-organized mind. In due course, the Hubshman Factors Corporation in New York would also be added to the Finance Division.

Nationwide was a necessary part of the picture, because Automatic Canteen had been asked to handle more and more complex in-plant feeding operations. Canteen had built up a reputation for being able to turn out new service features regularly. Now they would expand into complete in-plant feeding service including cafeterias, executive dining rooms, and automated food services. That ABT "bill changer" would fit into this operation too, because higher-priced complete meals would require reliable currency handling equipment.

A picture of Nathaniel Leverone working that "bill changer," in "Finance Magazine," shows him looking very pleased with its efficient performance. A contemplation of these figures might provide an additional reason: Automatic Canteen had sales and other income in the fiscal year ending October 3, 1959, amounting to $140,509,948. Net earnings reached an all-time high of $4,470,997. ABT's business volume in 1959, primarily from its research work, was approximately $3,000,000. Nationwide's sales were running at about $25,000,000 at that time. In the first six months of 1960, Commercial Discount had gross receivables of $24,952,769 and net earnings of $218,009. The earnings did not include any of the income from Commonwealth Savings and Loan Association of North Hollywood, California, in which Commercial Discount had a fifty per cent interest. (Just one question: what happened to all those nickels and pennies we used to hear about?)

Although Canteens had been installed at service bases abroad, general foreign expansion was not con-

sidered until the "European push-cart" situation had been thoroughly investigated. Now, Automatic Canteen's own plant in West Frankfort, Germany, has just turned out a handsome "Super-vendor." Called the "Dial-A-Sale," the unit towers as high as a room. It has a capacity of 68 selections from a total stock of 648 items. This is only the basic section; its central dial system can control from one to six vendor sections.

The "Dial-A-Sale" is now being used in Germany, built into store fronts, for convenient shopping at any hour of the day or night. It can also be installed as an automatic "shopping island" for residential areas, apartment buildings, institutions, and shopping centers.

Canteen has been re-evaluating its commitments in Europe, and the following is the comment in the annual report:

"The inordinate losses of the Foreign Division have been reduced; and general operating economies are being effected in most areas of the business. While our foreign program is not complete, we continue to make progress. We are constantly evaluating the European market and are capitalizing on the many industrial vending opportunities available in this relatively virgin territory. The change in the European economy resulting from the Common Market presents many opportunities and some problems, all of which are being thoroughly studied."

In the early thirties, Canteen was going nationwide —now it is going international, to develop its share of the huge new foreign vending market. People from the

Canteen staff are being sent to Europe to teach techniques of operation that have become standard practices here.

In 1960, there were six major, expanding divisions making up the "Canteen Complex": Food and Vending, Equipment Manufacturing; Product; Finance; Electronics; and Overseas Operations. And it all started with those first little red Canteens loaded with candy bars!

Chapter Thirteen

Any Good Thing That I May Do

As though his vigorous activities in Automatic Canteen were not enough, there was that other side to Nathaniel Leverone's life after the war years. He was still talking to groups of eager listeners all over the country and still caring about what was happening to "the other fellow."

The Canteen chairman took a close-up view of European countries after World War II. He remembers with sadness seeing long lines of women in France waiting for their ration of bread. They received only a small piece of the large french loaf, and waited patiently even for that in their sad, threadbare clothes. Nathaniel Leverone did not drive around in a limousine. He walked in the cities, hiked up and down rough terrain, climbed mountains. He looked the people in the eye, and he came home feeling sorry for conditions resulting from the war and more glad than ever that he was an American.

Speaking before American audiences, he more vigorously than ever urged them to be active, patriotic citizens—to appreciate their right to worship God, to

work in a land of opportunity, to vote, to realize that the future destiny of their great country was in their hands.

He pointed out all the blessings, all the reasons for giving thanks. "Less than two centuries old, this nation has a government which guarantees freedom and has been able to do more to eliminate human drudgery . . . toward giving happiness to people . . . toward producing goods that are useful . . . toward doing everything that is worthwhile . . . than all of the rest of the world combined during its history."

Nathaniel Leverone told a Washington audience in 1952, "You do not realize that today's humor seems to be possessed only by Americans. On my last trip to Europe I never saw anybody smiling or heard anyone laughing." When in London, he was walking with his good friend, Kenneth DeCourcy, a noted publisher. As they were agreeing on the sad lack of laughter, they were startled to hear a roar of amusement down a narrow passageway, and Mr. DeCourcy decided to investigate. He came back, grinning, and sheepishly said, "It was a blasted American laughing."

A great part of American vitality, this witty American believes, can be traced to our love of laughter. "We seem to be the last ones to possess a sense of humor, this thing that has enabled businessmen to overcome obstacles and that which inspires one actually to see something funny in disaster. Humor is the thing that enables a minister to preach a better sermon. It will enable a businessman to deal more fairly with his competitors and employees. It makes a better father and a better citizen. . . ."

The ingenious and adaptable Mr. Leverone often painted "word pictures" of outstanding examples of American ingenuity and adaptability. High on the list was Henry Morrison Flagler who changed Florida, the land of sand and alligators, into a dream vacationland. "He saw the potential of the raw country which had an almost perfect climate. He built railroads and towns, and developed the state to a level no one else had even dreamed possible. He had the foresight to be born and have the opportunity to develop his pet project at a time when the government still permitted him to keep most of the tremendous fortune he realized."

Mr. Canteen would point out all the huge and small nations of the world whose natural resources were far superior to those of the United States. "A professor and investigator recently went into the interior of China and said he had not seen anything like the natural wealth of that nation but they cannot take advantage of it because of the type of government they have." Our natural resources are the ingenuity and adaptability of Americans due to their type of government, he declared, but he emphasized that the free enterprise form of government would perish if Americans turned their freedom over to "welfare state" advocates.

The well-known speaker has often deplored the fact that political candidates do not discuss the vital issues—that they seem to concentrate on "popular" vote-getting techniques.

As an active director of Americans Will Vote during the early 1950's, the eloquent Chicagoan exerted every effort to stir up the consciences of good citizens

and get them to the polls, instead of leaving the fate of the country to well-oiled political machines. This was the way the situation looked to him:

"Many so-called decent people do not vote. All they do is sit around their clubs and complain. . . . You denounce the administration and you do not do anything about it. You do not vote. . .

"At a recent election in Chicago, I was the only one who voted during the first forty-five minutes in the morning and then I walked west about eight blocks in the heart of the slums and there was a polling booth and I am certain there were at least three hundred in line, and there were limousines with chauffeurs bringing fellows that looked like bums there to vote, and there were two ambulances that also brought people to vote. Now, I do not have any quarrel with those people. That is their right to vote even if they are on relief but we, who have a bread stake in the nation, are not interested. . . ."

Rotarian Nathaniel Leverone may have addressed more Rotary groups than anyone alive. When he talked to three hundred Rotarians at the Clearwater Gulf Club in Clearwater, Florida in 1953, he said that a sense of humor could have saved the people of Germany. "When that ridiculous Adolf Hitler pranced up and down before the German people telling them they were super race and he was super man, they should have laughed him out of existence.

"If Roosevelt had told the Americans he was super man—in spite of his great following, they would have said, 'Old Moose Jaw's gone off his rocker.' "

National and international politics were only one portion of Mr. Leverone's vibrant life during the 1950's. A random sampling of his activities will often show him among a group of smiling high school students with whose ambitions and ideals he is deeply concerned.

On a larger scale, there was the time he spoke to seven hundred and fifty boys and girls of the combined graduating classes of Eastern, Everett, and J. W. Sexton High Schools of Lansing, Michigan, and nearly five thousand friends and relatives. Speaking without notes as usual, the man who made a success of Canteen through honesty and integrity stressed the importance of honesty and integrity.

At another meeting, Nathaniel Leverone was back in the role of "introducer," but he may not have been quite so facetious on that occasion. The main speaker at the Merchants and Manufacturers Club, attended by over one thousand business men and women from all parts of the country was Mr. Leverone's long-time friend, Senator Everett M. Dirksen.

Notable during the early fifties was that inspiring period when Mr. Leverone was chairman of National Sunday School Week with its many responsibilities and blessings.

There were always speaking engagements, and radio and television commitments. Often he was asked to repeat his speeches on the radio, after he had finished talking to good-sized audiences, because it was felt that his messages should reach as many people as possible. In Chicago, he appeared on Don McNeill's "Breakfast Club" and "The Bob and Kay Show"; and

he has been heard and seen on stations throughout the country. He has contributed Leverone wit and wisdom to such familiar programs as "Voice of America," "The People's Platform," "America's Town Meeting of the Air," "Straight from the Shoulder," "Quiz Kids," and CARE broadcasts, all on a national hook-up.

In 1954, the Chicago Crime Commission honored Nathaniel Leverone with the title of "life member." Looking back, the Canteen man was reminded of the part that his experience with the Crime Commission had played in arousing his curiosity about the vending machine business. The bootleg era and Al Capone were past history, due to the unselfish efforts of the ever-vigilant Crime Commission, on which the Canteen man had served for so many years as secretary, director and a member of the three-man executive committee.

Again it was time for Youth Week in Chicago in 1954, and the Windy City's municipal offices were being turned over to boys and girls who had demonstrated major leadership qualities.

The grand climax is the annual awarding of scholarships and other honors in open competition. Open competition? To Mr. Nathaniel Leverone, who had become vice president of Chicago Youth Week in 1939 and chairman in 1945, those words are synonymous with "free enterprise":

"This climax of Youth Week is unquestionably one of the most dramatic object lessons in the American Free Enterprise system that could possibly be given to the teen-agers of America's second largest city. For all that counts is ability, plus the desire to win and

the ambition to drive them to give of themselves to forge to the top. Family background, social position, economic status, race, religion, influence or politics have no bearing whatsoever. All who enter have an equal chance . . . and the best youngsters win." More than one million boys and girls participate each year in Chicago Youth Week activities.

Mr. Leverone was also the dedicated administrator of the affairs of the Cerebral Palsy Association in just about every direction possible. He was president of the Chicago Cerebral Palsy Association, and a member the board of directors and the executive committee of the national organization as well. When an Illinois C. P. Association was formed in 1954, the organizers prevailed upon Mr. Leverone to be president of the state organization as well. They refused to take "No" for an answer.

It was Mr. Leverone's responsibility to distribute nearly half a million dollars that had been raised during the 1953 Telethon for Cerebral Palsy. "The money is allocated to accredited research groups only after making certain of their need and that their objectives coincide with those of the association." A fifty-thousand-dollar contribution by the Cerebral Palsy Association to the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, at the behest of Nathaniel Leverone when he was president, was the first to that group which enabled it to be established. In addition to other CP matters of importance that required attention, plans for the next Telethon were always under consideration.

Later, in 1954, the newsworthy career of Nathaniel Leverone was featured in a number of publications

almost simultaneously. His was "the success story of the month" in Success Magazine, the LaSalle Extension University publication. The story started with one of Mr. Leverone's much-quoted axioms: "If man didn't always try to reach the ideal, we would never progress." It ended with words of advice from Mr. Leverone: "The man who succeeds knows his objectives. He uses what he has to gain what he wants. He reinforces his ambition with training and with industry and he knows the importance of persistence."

There was that "Chicago Profile" by George Murray, in the September 26 issue of the Pictorial Review section of the "Chicago Sunday American," which was illustrated with a whimsical cartoon depicting him as "a stuffed-shirt deflater" at an Anti-Superstition Society meeting. Deflating stuffed shirts, "with a sharp yet benign wit," has been part of Mr. Leverone's ritual in many of his appearances.

The George Murray feature also related a "vocational guidance" story from the Canteen man's treasure trove of anecdotes:

Holding out his hand in fellowship came to be a creed and code with Mr. Leverone, and he has always done everything possible to help people—especially young people—who look and act as though they need it. However, he once ran into a job-hunting young man who had been described as "precocious." The interview started nicely, with the young man shaking hands firmly and with complete self-assurance. Then the job applicant seated himself, relaxed with a cigarette and began to fire questions—some of them quite impertinent. There seemed to be some doubt about who was

interviewing whom, and the brash young fellow did not get the job.

Feeling slightly jolted, Leverone still could philosophize. "By Christopher," he told George Murray, "the youngsters of today have more assurance, more drive than their fathers. If they can match those qualities with vision, industry, thrift, and integrity, there'll be no stopping them."

Nathaniel Leverone likes people. It is important to note that a man's station did not matter in the least to him, and as a result he has had an interesting and widely assorted circle of friends. He gets along well with them, as he does with anyone whom he meets.

He has numbered among his friends leaders of the nation—a Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, governors, mayors, religious leaders and countless members of Congress and men high in both Republican and Democratic administrations in Washington.

On the other hand, he has maintained boyhood friendships from Keene, and with classmates and fraternity brothers at Dartmouth and throughout the country. Some of these men were eminently successful, while others suffered the opposite fortune. When he was able to be generous, he helped those less fortunate than himself if he was in a position to do so.

A picture of the chairman of Automatic Canteen and a timely message on voting also appeared on "The Director's Page" of "Better Living," the company publication of Chicago Federal Savings and Loan Association, of which he is a director. Mr. Leverone, on this occasion, reiterated his political and voting views. "I

am often asked whether I am a Republican or a Democrat, and my answer is, 'I am neither, I am an American.' " Every American voter should think of himself as an American, Nathaniel Leverone believes. One of his most famous, and most quoted, gems is his definition of an American, which he uses in response to the question of his party affiliation, as well as in many other situations. It is:

> "An American is a man who places the welfare of his nation above that of any political party or minority group to which he belongs."

The Canteen founder also loomed large in a feature story in "Vend," the magazine of Automatic Merchandising. The article reviewed Canteen's history and saluted its twenty-fifth anniversary—and it would be impossible to tell that story without mentioning the founder and chairman.

During the fall of 1954, Mr. Leverone presided at a meeting he considered very special. Awards were presented to Illinois winners in the Tenth Annual National Employment of the Physically Handicapped Poster-Illustration Contest. The occasion was of deep personal interest to him because he had been striving for many years, as president of Goodwill Industries of Chicago, to educate industry on the practical value of employing the handicapped. In addition to presiding at the meeting, Mr. Leverone presented a Presidential Citation to Harry White, named Outstanding Disabled Veteran of 1954; and he, in turn, received an award from the Illinois Disabled Veterans for his "outstanding service beyond the call of duty to the disabled men and women and their dependents."

The man who had "sparked" the organization, in 1935, spoke at the annual convention of National Automatic Merchandising Association in Washington in October, 1954. "Mr. Leverone sounded the keynote of success and stability in an address which won him a standing ovation at its close," according to a report.

On October 25, 1954, Mr. Leverone went to New York to accept one of many "Oscars" for the Canteen Company. Through the ten years between 1952 and 1962, it was an annual custom for Mr. Leverone to accept awards for Automatic Canteen's best-of-industry annual reports, in the restaurant and vending machine category. Mr. Leverone says that this was not a personal honor; it was wholly and completely a Canteen honor. He credits Dick Burleigh, the Canteen Quarterly editor, with being "the master mechanic in this project." In the industry-wide competition, sponsored by "Financial World," reports are judged on format, method of presentation of text and financial data, quality of printing and general excellence. In the past ten years, Canteen has been awarded seven bronze "Oscars" and three second-place certificates. That was just one of the places Nat Leverone went in October, 1954.

The chairman of Canteen had a busy October and November that year. In addition to the three events already listed, he was the main speaker at the annual meeting of District 174, Rotary International—celebrating Rotary's golden anniversary — at the Lowry Hotel in St. Paul, on November 16. That was a luncheon meeting. That night he went across the Mississippi

to address the Minneapolis Association of Credit Men at Hotel Radisson.

Sprinkled in and around the aforementioned appearances were: the opening meeting of the National Society of Arts and Letters on October 2; the dedication of the restored St. Mary's Chapel of Knox College, Galesburg, Illinois, on October 3; the dedication of the Fred Poor Memorial Y.M.C.A. at the University of Illinois on October 9; the Tri-State Credit Conference luncheon in Sioux City, Iowa, on October 15; and the Women's Beautiful Association of Chicago luncheon meeting November 15, where he spoke on "The Future of Chicago as a Great Metropolis." It will be noted that he talked to a luncheon group in Chicago on the 15th, and to two groups in the Twin Cities on the 16th of November!

Nothing seemed to be unlikely, in the richly imaginative minds of some of the top Canteen men. Although he was not the original instigator, Nathaniel Leverone was one member of a grinning quintet that stood ready to burst into a rousing rendition of "Take Me Out to the Ball Park!" in the fall of 1954.

The purchase of the Philadelphia Athletics, and the decision to move the ball club to Kansas City, had absolutely nothing to do with the Automatic Canteen business; and Mr. Leverone, although an investor, was mainly an interested bystander while the lengthy negotiations were in a state of fluctuation.

The news created a sensation in sports circles. A reliable source described the excitement:

"The morning of November 9, the press of the na-

tion headlined the final act in a drama which had held the interest of millions of sports fans and businessmen from one end of the country to another, for the preceding four months. This was formal approval by the other American League baseball clubs of the purchase of the Philadelphia team, the 'Athletics,' by a group headed by Arnold M. Johnson, and moving the team to Kansas City, Missouri. Everyone is familiar with the seesawing negotiations, from the intensive coverage given the story by newspapers, magazines, radio and television, so that it is not necessary to recount the details here. . . ."

There was, of course, no corporate connection between Automatic Canteen Company of America and the American League baseball team. Mr. Leverone's association was on a purely personal basis, as an individual investor. No Canteen company funds were involved. The venture was merely one of many business enterprises in which Arnold Johnson, versatile vice chairman of the board, was interested.

There was no doubt about Mr. Nathaniel Leverone's delight at being associated with a baseball team. Baseball had been his favorite competitive sport, from his boyhood days in New Hampshire. He had many friends of influence in Kansas City and was highly respected there. This congenial circumstance contributed greatly to the success of the negotiations and final consummation of the deal and was an important factor at all times.

Instead of singing "Take Me Out to the Ball Park," Mr. Leverone took himself there on one memorable occasion that was reported by AP. He was in Kansas

City during the feting of the Kansas City Athletics when they transferred from New York to their new home park. A number of Kansas City officials, new owners and other dignitaries had scheduled a conference at the ball park on the day before the first game.

Rather than rolling up to the park in a limousine, the man who was both chairman of the board of Canteen and of the Kansas City Athletics, chose to walk the six miles. The gatekeeper at the park, a burly Irishman, barred his entry. He did not believe that one of the dignitaries would actually walk to the park. Another worker came by to see what the fuss was about, and told his fellow worker, "Leave him in, I seen him on TEVEE."

Mr. Leverone was associated with the Kansas City A's for about five years. During his attendance at one of the Kansas City Athletics games, the Canteen chairman was pictured in a smiling pose with his close friend, Alfred M. Landon, the former Republican presidential candidate, and Mr. Landon's grandson.

The master of the witty phrase had some statements to make when he was in Kansas City on April 6, 1955, about an article by Arthur Mann which was currently appearing in the "Saturday Evening Post." His remarks were headlined in newspapers and picked up by wire services throughout the country. Mr. Leverone considered the story, "How to Buy a Ball Club for Peanuts," a fine piece of fiction. "I like the Arabian Nights. I'm very fond of it. I think the Post article should be added to it. . . . I, with my associates, put in enough money to amount to three and one-half mil-

lion in cash (for the Athletics). Now if that is peanuts, they are solid gold, diamond-studded peanuts."

Because he detected "an inference of trickery in the Post story," Mr. Leverone gave Mr. Johnson his highest endorsement. He said that Canteen "had sought for two years for a capable, honest man, before selecting Johnson for an executive post. . . . We found he had high character, fine personality and good business experience. There is not a tricky hair in his head. He is frank and above board. Anyone who doubts this should talk to the Mack family. They have told me personally he is the fairest man they have ever met."

Mr. Arnold Johnson had come to Canteen after many years in the investment and banking business. It was on a part-time basis that Mr. Leverone brought him into the company in 1952 as vice-chairman of the board, when the original executive committee was formed. The chairman told him that "within six months, you will either dislike the automatic merchandising business, or fall in love with it. At the end of six months let's make our decision as to your fitness for this business." By 1953, Arnold Johnson had resigned as vice president of the City National Bank and Trust Company of Chicago to devote all his attention to Automatic Canteen, where he performed with great distinction.

Only a few of Mr. Leverone's speaking engagements have been noted, over random periods, to indicate the crowded condition of his calendar. It would take almost a book to list all of them. They run the gamut—from service organizations, to commencement programs, to the One Hundred and Thirtieth Annual

Reunion of the Enfield Society for the Detection of Thieves and Robbers at Osborn Prison Farm.

In 1955, he made an appearance that should not be passed over lightly. That Biblical quotation about a prophet's not being without honor "save in his own country" does not apply here. In the Keene Evening Sentinel for June 24, 1955, a front page story proclaimed, "Famed Business, Civic Leader to Speak Here." The first paragraph, in the story by Ralph W. Newell, says a great deal in a few words, "A man who has probably gone further in business and done more for his fellow man than anyone graduated from Keene High School in the past 50 years, is coming 'home' next week."

On the following Monday, Nathaniel Leverone was scheduled to speak to the Keene Rotary Club for the second time in almost twenty years. When he came "home," it was usually for the purpose of relaxing at Beech Hill and enjoying some of Dr. Louise's luscious blueberry pies. Sometimes, when he felt the cloying warmth of too much civilization closing in on him, he would tell Mrs. Leverone and Meredith to pack their suitcases, even in the middle of winter. In due course, they would be tramping through the snow somewhere around Beech Hill, pausing after awhile to build a fire, then breathing in the rugged splendor and isolation of the New Hampshire countryside as they sipped bracing cups of coffee.

Referring to their native son's "schedule of business duties and speaking engagements that would stagger a half dozen ordinary men," the Keene newspaper also traced the history of the development of Canteen,

from a comparative "shoestring" to 275,000 candy and food machines grossing $50,000,000 a year. "Today the concern is reported to be the largest distributor of candy bars in the world."

A number of clippings indicate that Keene is keeping track of this Chicago businessman who once did such a fine job of "doctoring up" the business ads in the senior play programs. In the 1955 story, they like the idea of his being associated with the Kansas City A's, and they list his other activities with pride.

The list, in 1955, was phenomenal. "Nat," Mr. Newell wrote, "is president of the Anti-Superstition Society (nationally known organization which laughs at superstitions), president of both the United Cerebral Palsy Association of Chicago and the United Cerebral Palsy Association of Illinois, president of Alliance Francaise de Chicago, chairman of the Mayor's Committee for a Cleaner Chicago, trustee of Culver-Stockton College, director of the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, trustee of The Hadley School for the Blind, director of Chicago Better Business Bureau (he was vice president for two years), associate director of International Christian Leadership (he was president for six years), director of Goodwill Industries of Chicago (he was president for three years), a member of the Council of the Laymen's National Committee, director of The Friends of the Chicago Public Library, member of the Lay Committee of the National Council of the Church of Christ, director of Americans Will Vote, member of the Citizens' Board of the University of Chicago, member of the City Planning Advisory Board, member of the Chicago Aero Commission."

The roll call does not stop here. It's time to take a deep breath and start another paragraph, reviewing a few of Mr. Leverone's past affiliations:

"He has also served as president of the Merchants and Manufacturers Club, Phi Gamma Delta Club of Chicago, Dartmouth Club of Chicago, Interfraternity Club, and other organizations. Mr. Leverone was national chairman of Sunday School Week in 1952; a member of the Board of Governors of Chicago Opera Company for nine years; a director of Junior Achievement in Chicago for seven years; co-chairman of the Sponsors Committee of the Salvation Army for several years; and also chairman of the National Association of Manufacturers Committee on Civilian Production Resumption. He has been chairman of the public affairs committee of the Chicago Association of Commerce and Industry." Take another deep breath:

"He also served as director of salvage for the War Production Board for the State of Illinois and the Chicago Metropolitan Defense Area, having been appointed jointly by Governor Green and Mayor Kelly; he served on the Army Council as chairman of the Air Force Committee; and he was a member of the Executive Committee of the Chicago Commission on National Defense." And perhaps the Free and Easy Club in Keene, New Hampshire, was the start of it all!

The man who was scheduled to introduce Nat Leverone at the Keene Rotary Club meeting on the following Monday rose briefly and brightly to the occasion. He asked how many of the audience had read the Sentinel story. All responded in the affirmative, and the

toastmaster merely said, "The Sentinel scooped me—here's Nat!"

In 1956, Nathaniel Leverone's two years of untiring effort on behalf of victims of dread cerebral palsy, the greatest crippler of children, were saluted at a special luncheon. On that occasion he was the recipient of a plaque titled "Distinguished Service Award" and bearing the signatures of entertainment star Bob Hope; Esther G. Perry, President UCP of Illinois; Leonard H. Goldenson, chairman, USPA, Inc.; and Dwight H. Green, president, UCPA of Chicago.

In presenting the plaque, Hon. Dwight H. Green, former governor of Illinois, who succeeded Mr. Leverone as president of UCPA of Chicago, paid him a splendid and well-merited tribute for his "outstanding leadership and public service for helping to build a beacon of hope for handicapped children."

It was an extraordinary luncheon meeting, with lively and enthusiastic speeches by a number of great Americans, including Leonard H. Goldenson, president of American Broadcasting Company and Paramount Theaters, Inc., who was national board chairman of the United Cerebral Palsy Association in 1956; Jack Hausman, vice chairman of the board, United Cerebral Palsy Association of New York City; John C. Sevcik, president of Burton-Dixie Corporation, who was chairman of the 1956 finance campaign of UCPA of Chicago; and Danny Thomas, star of television, stage and movies.

Chicago "Sun-Times" syndicated columnist Herb Graffis rhapsodized about that event. "Maybe once out of fifty times you hear extremely interesting and in-

spirational remarks after the lunch bibs are hauled down." All of these speeches were sparkling gems, according to Mr. Graffis. "The lunch, officially, was for presenting a plaque to Nat Leverone, thanking him for the valuable job he's done to stir up helpful interest in fighting CP. Nat is an experienced hand at these holy-cause deals which get big businessmen pitching in. He is a transplanted Down-East Yankee who accents results instead of dragging out oratory; so he wrapped up a neat package of gratitude and selling in a few masterly minutes.

"Then Danny Thomas did another fast job of sparkling selling. Then Jack Hausman, vice chairman of the United Cerebral Palsy Association of New York City, and John G. Sevcik, chairman of the 1956 CP campaign, made talks far better than the average.

"But this Goldenson is the greatest. He got you thinking about a young fellow horribly handicapped physically by CP but so blazingly brilliant mentally that he devised a typewriter that would work when he virtually blew words into it. He told how the fellow began working on a somewhat similar device that could be operated by people so agonizingly behind the 8-ball they couldn't even blow as they desired but could only wink their eyes by controlled consciousness."

Nat Leverone is familiar with that feeling of deep-down warmth that can come to a man who strives to give handicapped people a chance to express themselves and develop their talents. He is still a director of the United Palsy Association of Chicago.

In 1939, "the busiest man in Chicago" had been named vice president of Chicago Youth Week. In 1945,

he became chairman. As he continued in that post for many stimulating, inspiring years, the young people of Chicago knew that their interests were his interests, their goals his goals.

Mr. Leverone did not worry about starting things on a small scale; he knew they could be built up. From a few scholarships at first, they had reached an impressive total by June, 1959. During his twenty years of active association with Chicago Youth Week, scholarships totaling an estimated $5,000,000 had been awarded to students with outstanding records.

Chicago Youth Week was much more than just one week set aside for honors and festivities. It was the climax of a year-around program in which the young people of Chicago were organized to perform in any fields in which they were needed, to sponsor worthwhile programs, to draft codes of conduct, to promote high moral values for themselves and their fellow teen-agers.

When the friend and advisor to so many good young people announced that he would retire as Chicago Youth Week Chairman in 1959, there were protests and expressions of regret, but everyone realized the magnitude of Nathaniel Leverone's contributions during twenty years of service, and they knew that the superior pace he had set would be continued because it had quality and durability.

In recognition of his two decades of intense concern for the welfare of the young people of Chicago, Mayor Richard J. Daley presented Nathaniel Leverone with a handsome plaque and with the sort of tribute that money cannot buy:

"I have been proud to be associated with Nat Leverone who has given his time so unselfishly to work on civic and community problems. This plaque is in recognition for his helping youth to help themselves. He is a great citizen, a great Chicagoan, and a great American."

There were some lighter moments in the atmosphere, to relieve the solemnity of that Youth Week of 1959. In one picture, "Mayor Daley is casting a wary eye at Nathaniel Leverone as the latter indulges in some of the subtle 'ribbing' of His Honor for which Mr. Leverone is famous."

Many heart-warming messages came to Mr. Leverone in his role as chairman of Youth Week. Mr. Shane MacCarthy, executive director, President's Council on Youth Fitness, wrote:

"The boys and girls of Chicago are indeed fortunate to have a man of your stature and affection at the helm of such an undertaking. Others might be named in executive capacities in connection with the Chicago Youth Week but everyone told me that the ingredient of real strength is 'Nat Leverone.' I hope that God will bless you with continued health and energy to carry on this great work for our young citizens."

Benjamin C. Willis, general superintendent of schools, Chicago Board of Education, also expressed typical appreciation:

"The outstanding leadership you contributed as chairman of Chicago Youth Week was evident in the program at the Civic Assembly today. For many years you have rendered great service to the children and youth of this city. . . ."

Does this mean that Mr. Leverone actually retired from his Youth Week activities? Several years later, we read: "Early in the fall semester, the 1962-1963 school year Codes of Conduct got off to a flying start with a luncheon in the Merchandise Mart sponsored by Mr. Leverone, who is chairman of the Adult Advisory Committee of the movement. About one hundred high school student council presidents, principals, and other interested persons attended to review the progress of the program and to outline plans for the current academic year."

On that occasion, Mr. Leverone again referred to the publicity that is given to acts of juvenile delinquency "while we hear little about the encouraging work being done by high school students, particularly those youthful leaders who are Codes of Conduct members, to encourage and influence other young people in adopting codes of self-discipline and then enforcing obedience to them."

The Codes of Conduct movement started at Taft High School in Chicago in 1951 under the guidance of David O. Taylor, now executive director. Mr. Leverone states that it is the young people who put their own impetus into the program that is now nationwide. The faith and encouragement of adult leaders like Mr. Leverone has been a great source of inspiration to young people who do not make the front pages because they happen to be GOOD. Some of them do get their pictures published in Canteen Quarterly. This is the caption under one picture that accompanied the Winter, 1962, story:

"Present at Mr. Leverone's Codes of Conduct plan-

ning meeting were: Joseph Lo Savio, president, Student Council, Lane Tech; Elaine Yamada, president, Student Council, Senn High School; Guadalupe Garcia, Bowen High School, and Thomas Butler, head of Student Court, Lane Tech." With them were Nathaniel Leverone, chairman of the Adult Advisory Committee of Codes of Conduct; Mrs. Anne V. Zinser, chairman, Chicago Youth Week; David Taylor, executive director, Codes of Conduct.

In a picture on the opposite page, "Diane Peterson, a student at Taft High School, is amused at Mr. Leverone's humorous admonitions during Codes of Conduct Workshop." Also in that group was Adriennes Segal, Bowen High School.

These fine young people are not featured in notoriety stories, but they do have their names in a book. They are representative of all the Codes of Conduct members who deserve salutes and bouquets!

Chapter Fourteen

A Splendid Little Magazine

The company publication, Canteen Quarterly, is "little" only in size. In content and make-up, it is a magazine that catches the eye and holds it. Most notable is the fact that it is the history book of a company moving forward with great power and energy—and still giving full consideration to the human element involved.

Back in 1929 and 1930, it will be recalled, Leverone and an assistant named Bill Swingler went out "peddling" those first small Canteens at factories in Chicago and the surrounding countryside. Leafing through a copy of Canteen Quarterly for 1952, a familiar name almost leaps out of page 6. "William F. Swingler Elected Vice President," the story is headed, and the text reads:

"Upon recommendation of Board Chairman Nathaniel Leverone, William F. Swingler was elected to the newly created office of Vice President in Charge of Operating. Mr. Swingler was one of the early employees whose energy and ability has resulted in many

promotions, until he was finally rewarded by his election to this extremely important position.

"William Swingler started his Canteen career in September, 1929, just two months after the company was founded. In common with all the early members of the Canteen family, he learned every phase of the business from actual experience, and shared in the pioneering work that solved the problems encountered and that pointed the way to the development of sound and efficient service.

"In his new post as vice president of Automatic Canteen Company of America, Mr. Swingler is at the head of the entire operating department which establishes standards and oversees performance of all Canteen managers and distributors from coast to coast. He brings to his new duties not only a wide knowledge of actual operating conditions, but also an unusual ability to impart knowledge to others, coupled with a friendliness that has won him widespread popularity throughout the Canteen family."

Ten years later, in the Canteen Quarterly, there is another picture of William F. Swingler, and this time it is headed, "Vice President William F. Swingler, Canteen Employee of Longest Service." He would be, of course. The story notes that "Mr. Leverone, when recalling the pioneering days of Automatic Canteen, when every direction in which the fledgling company moved was an unblazed trail, frequently mentions the Leverone-Swingler 'Installation' team. . . .

"Second only to Mr. Leverone, Bill Swingler is 'Mr. Canteen,' as Mr. Leverone is frequently referred to as 'Mr. Vending.' A solid, stocky man of tremendous

physical strength, and rock-firm jaw, Bill combines gentleness of voice and courtesy of manner with moral fiber and high principles which make dealing with him a pleasure." Canteen managers and distributors form an enthusiastic cheering section for Mr. Swingler—a situation that is very important in the development of a company. A Canteen man for thirty-three years, Mr. Swingler's is a great Canteen success story. Nathaniel Leverone has often expressed his "affection, admiration and respect for Bill Swingler."

Automatic Canteen's veteran distributors, officers and branch managers with thirty or more years of service were honored at the convention banquet in 1963. In fact, most of them sat at the speaker's table with Mr. Leverone. Among them was another William who was among the pioneers of the Canteen operation.

William F. Krebill was the first distributor appointed by Automatic Canteen Company of America, when the firm began to expand out of Chicago in 1930. He became state distributor for Iowa, Kansas and Nebraska, and later helped to establish one of the largest Canteen operations in the nation in St. Louis, Missouri. With his central headquarters now located in Moline, Illinois, he is still an active member of the Canteen family. Mr. Krebill is proud that his very first account—John Deere and Company—is still his leading customer. Canteen Quarterly featured a dazzling six-page illustrated story about the Quad-City Twenty-second Anniversary, over which Mr. Krebill and his partner, Emil Brauchle, presided in 1952.

Canteen people are civic-minded. The Quarterly reports many interesting stories about unselfish serv-

ice, often unrelated to accounts, in cities all over the country.

One of the most impressive features of the Canteen Quarterly has been the Chairman's Page, on the inside of the front cover. Since 1960, it has been called the Founder's Page. In each issue Mr. Leverone has expressed his philosophy on some phase of modern life. In the case of "Death Stalks the Highways," he is most vehement in his disapproval of reckless, discourteous drivers who make death traps of the nation's highways.

The editorial which made the greatest impact was published in the Canteen Quarterly for 1960. Entitled "The Menace of Mediocrity," this powerful argument against the current "enthronement of mediocrity" in education, industry and civic activity brought a deluge of enthusiastic endorsements from distinguished leaders in every field. Scores of requests for reprints kept the presses humming.

Culver-Stockton College reprinted the editorial in "View," the official college publication, with W. A. Herington, the athletic director, commenting in a letter to Mr. Leverone: "I have attempted to teach this not only in my classes, but also in our athletic department, and feel that definitely there is no place in our today's life for mediocrity."

Chalmers C. Barr, personnel manager, West Virginia Pulp and Paper, of Tyrone, Pennsylvania, wrote of "The Menace of Mediocrity": ". . . It is a sad, sad commentary upon our times that you must say that yours is a 'voice crying in the wilderness.' Keep crying! Your voice must be heard!"

A. D. Niles, branch manager of Canadian Food Products Sales Limited, Industrial Food Service Division, sent a request for 100 copies. "It is such an excellent article, with a really worthwhile message, that I would like to supply each of our operation managers with a copy."

From "the other side of the world" came a surprise salute. Headmaster Abraham J. Marks of the Selim School in Aden, on the Arabian Sea, wrote that his son Christopher, an employee at the Feltham Works (the London Canteen International operation) had sent him a copy of the Canteen Quarterly for the Fall of 1960. "I am writing to express my appreciation of your comments on 'The Menace of Mediocrity' on the Chairman's Page. I found it to be one of the truest and most stimulating articles I have read, not only for the youth of today, but also for their elders."

Going back to the early 1950's, chairman Leverone editorially urged the citizens of the country to fight inflation as individuals—to avoid "scare buying," to write to their congressmen protesting against reckless government spending, to put their money into Defense Bonds and savings accounts. "Disaster on the Horizon," printed in Canteen Quarterly for Fall 1951, drew the attention of many noteworthy Americans—businessmen, distinguished political leaders, writers and speakers.

Hon. Frazier Reams, member of congress from Ohio, considered Mr. Leverone's editorial of such urgent consequence that he placed it in the appendix of the Congressional Record, giving the following rea-

sons in these remarks from the floor of the House of Representatives on October 16:

"Mr. Speaker, no thoughtful American can deny the fact that there is a possibility of disaster on our national horizon. I have just read a statement from a great American who has confidence in the judgment of the American people and their ability to take the proper action when they realize what crisis we are in. In this he makes suggestions which are so practical that none of us should fail to heed them. Under unanimous consent, I place in the Appendix of the Record the following statement by Mr. Nathaniel Leverone, one of the thoughtful citizens of Chicago and of the United States."

Many commendations on "Disaster on the Horizon" poured into the Canteen office, and a number of them were printed in the pages of Canteen Quarterly for Winter, 1951. Requests for copies of the editorial were graciously filled and eventually reached a large audience.

A biographer would naturally be interested in Mr. Leverone's opinions on inflation as it related to the state of the nation's economy in 1963. When he was asked if the administration's proposed tax cuts would benefit industry today, Mr. Leverone said, "Not as long as we still have inflation."

Mr. Leverone's editorials drew widespread attention. His subjects range from "Generosity—an American Privilege" and "The First Requirement is Honesty" to "Delinquency is a Curable Disease." As a vigorously active member of Americans Will Vote, he dealt with the serious responsibilities of every citizen

to help choose the candidates who would do the most for the country as a whole. As a businessman who practiced honesty and integrity, he discussed the merits of those virtues. He spoke of the need for decent leadership, for healthy standards of competition, for an appreciation of the problems and aspirations of the young people with whom he was so closely associated for more than twenty years.

In addition to "Death Stalks the Highways" and "The Menace of Mediocrity," Mr. Leverone also states his philosophy in two additional editorials which are reprinted at the close of this book. They are "Government Is No Campus" and "The Disappearing Virtue of Righteous Indignation," both of which rated many fine comments.

In 1951, when we were still fighting to drive the Chinese Communists out of Korea, branches of the armed services were hailed in issues of Canteen Quarterly. It was noted that there were Canteens in all the Armed Forces installations, so the interest was mutual. The illustrations accompanying the articles are eye-catching. In the Fall 1951 issue of the Quarterly, there is "a hitherto unpublished photo of the B-36, which shows to excellent advantage the size and beauty of the Air Force's largest aircraft." Featured in the Canteen Quarterly for Fall and Winter, 1951, were Ellington Air Force Base, Carswell Air Force Base, Camp Lejeune Marine Corps Training Base, Great Lakes Training Center, and the Army Training Center at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. The service men and women were pictured drilling, training and enjoying recreational facilities. Appropriately

enough, there were a couple of pictures of young service people taking advantage of the Canteen candy installations.

Canteen Quarterly takes a tremendous interest in the people whose industrial and office establishments furnish the sites for Canteen operations. Because this is a country in which any person with talent, determination to work, and faith in the future of his country may become a captain of industry, the series entitled "Among Canteen's Customers" is very often a "grass roots" success story. There was Isaac Singer, the man who almost despaired of inventing a practical sewing machine—and now there are about four thousand varieties of family and industrial Singer Sewing Machines being used by people all over the world, "from the natives of Darkest Africa and the South Sea Islands to inhabitants of icebound sub-arctic villages."

There was William Wrigley, Sr., who peddled soap from his father's small factory at the age of nine. Deere and Company was founded by a pioneer blacksmith who had a small shop in Grand Decatur, Illinois. John Pemberton, who created Coca-Cola, in 1886 was a Confederate veteran and small-town druggist in Georgia. His health failing, he sold two-thirds interest in the formula for twelve hundred dollars. Before he died the next year, he sold the other third for a small sum. The wholesale druggist who acquired the Coca-Cola "gold mine" was a merchandising genius who soon had everybody in the country drinking Coca-Cola.

At the last count, there were several hundred "cus-

tomers" whose company histories had been handsomely reviewed in the Canteen Quarterly. It would be impossible to discuss or name all of them, but this cross-section sampling will indicate that the Canteen employees are being educated in the history of the American Free Enterprise system and its rewards: Continental Motors; New England Telephone and Telegraph Company; Fairbanks, Morse; Corning Glass Works; Chicago's new Prudential Insurance Building; C. H. Masland & Sons, Weavers; Westinghouse Air Brake Company; Chrysler Corporation of Canada, Ltd.; GMC Trucks and Coaches; American Airlines Jet Service; Caterpillar Tractor Company; Chance Vought Aircraft; General Electric Appliances; San Diego Naval Supply Center; Hallmark Cards; Ottawa Silica Company; North American Van Lines; Cadillac's Cleveland Ordnance Plant; IBM, which was founded by Thomas J. Watson, Sr., the man who originated those THINK placards back in 1911, and many, many more.

In the Canteen Quarterly for Fall 1951, there is a firm that probably does not have Canteens installed in its factories—and yet it is deeply involved in the early development and subsequent progress of Automatic Canteen. Canteen is the customer in this instance—probably the largest customer that the Hershey Chocolate Company has. Mr. Hershey originally was in the Caramel Candy business, and he sold it for one million dollars in 1901. At the age of forty-four, he started his Hershey Chocolate factory in the rich Lebanon Valley in southeastern Pennsylvania.

Canteen Quarterly is lively with human interest

stories. As far back as 1951, twenty-year veterans of the Automatic Canteen Company were being honored. There was even a lady among them—Miss Mary Anderson, head of the Administrative Payroll Department of National Office. The senior woman employee, she was presented with a watch in recognition of her long term of service.

A lady named Miss Jane Schukraft, one of the veteran Canteen employees, was secretary to Mr. Leverone for twenty-seven years. Growing with the company, she was very much a part of its progress through all of the problems it faced in the beginning. Nathaniel Leverone praises her to the skies, seeming in awe of her great finesse in handling the horde of people who trooped in and out of his office, from those in the top echelon of business and government to the lowliest unfortunate acquaintance or friend who might be suffering the worst the depression had to offer, and turning to the Canteen man for the handout which might be his last bridge to continuing along the hard and rocky road. Those in the latter category at times were particularly trying, but Miss Schukraft only once succumbed in her chief's absence, and dug into her own pocket.

(The founder of Canteen often has chuckled over the thought that he at one time considered hanging the pawnshop insignia outside his door—he had the reputation of being a "soft touch.")

A rare insight into Mr. Leverone's character can be found in the fact that after twenty-seven years, he never once slipped, even under stress, and called Miss Schukraft's successor by her name, and never once did

he say those words which are the hallmark of so many men in such circumstances, "But, Miss Schukraft always used to . . ."

The 1951 Canteen Quarterlies featured many illustrated stories and articles about outings, luncheons, promotions, Canteen displays and exhibits—and here is a picture of Nathaniel Leverone giving out scholarships to a group of Chicago teen-agers!

In the Winter of 1951, St. Paul distributor LeRoy Johnson received a "conscience letter" in the mail. It read:

"Dear Sirs: Please find enclosed 50c, money I owed your concern for years. I used to work in Mpls. and your company had a vending machine at the place I worked. One time it got out of order, and I remember taking five bars of candy without paying for them. I know things like this have to be made right in order to be a Christian. Please forgive."

An item in the Winter 1952 Quarterly tells about Nathaniel Leverone being elected president of Alliance Francaise de Chicago. "Alliance Francaise is a national organization whose sole aim is to promote an appreciation of French culture. . . . The French ambassador is always a guest of the Alliance and among other important guests in recent years was General Charles de Gaulle. Most recent was Jacques Du Pont, former minister of France."

There was no cause for panic, when "Hurricane Hazel" brought floods to western Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio, according to the Winter 1954 Canteen Quarterly. There was a happy ending to the story which told about the anxiety of Canteen Distributor

Charles A. New—and his gratitude when "I found that all of my accounts which were located in the flooded sections, moved our Canteens for us." This, the story pointed out, is an excellent testimonial to the good will that Mr. New had built up around Steubenville, Ohio. Most people will try to save their own possessions—and then make a dash for it—when danger threatens. "If the muddy, filthy water had gotten into the Canteens it would have been a terrific job to have had to clean and sterilize all of them. This operation did not lose one penny's worth of merchandise by the flood, although in some places it was above the rooftops of houses."

In the same issue, there is an article about the Klein Institute and Mr. Jack Klein's Aptitude Tests. The Klein Aptitude Testing program was being used in the Canteen organization, because it is considered a valuable "scientific method of taking 'the measure of a man' mentally and emotionally, with an accuracy comparable to that of determining his physical dimensions with a tape measure, and his weight with a scale. . . . The Klein tests facilitate the selection of the right job for each employee . . . the job where he will not only contribute the most, but receive the greatest benefits. . . . Very often the result of having taken an aptitude test, and getting into the right occupation quickly, actually is saving years of misdirected endeavor in attaining success."

The Automatic Canteen Company of America has been very active in promoting fund-raising drives for worthy causes. Canteen Quarterly publicizes all the appeals with special features. One March of Dimes

story starts, "It now takes 150 dimes to pay for one day of physical therapy which often determines whether a victim of infantile paralysis will ever walk again." Pages are devoted to United Fund, Easter Seal, Red Cross, United Cerebral Palsy and other fund-raising drives. "A 'Red Feather' in the Canteen Hat" was the title of a three-page Canteen Quarterly story in the winter of 1955. Not only were a great many company officials and employees actively engaged in the Red Feather collection campaign, but Red Feather emblems were put on all the paper cups in the Canteen drink units, and Red Feather stickers were affixed to many of the Canteen trucks.

The accelerating progress of the Automatic Canteen Company can be traced through the issues of the Canteen Quarterly. In the summer of 1956, there is a picture of the new Canteen Hot Food Vendor, designed to dispense soups, chili, spaghetti, macaroni creole and beef goulash at the drop of a coin.

There is a picture of one of the first large Canteen Servinettes—nine units—stretching along a wall of a dining room in a business establishment in the Spring 1956 Quarterly. With the units mounted in a uniform pattern in one long panel, the effect is pleasing and orderly. This service, the text says, is designed to provide the most complete and convenient facilities to supplement cafeterias in large plants, and to furnish lunch and snack service in smaller plants and other locations where cafeterias cannot be supported.

In Canteen Quarterly for Fall 1958, an attractive four-drink Canteen Vendor is shown—all pre-

pared to dispense the finest carbonated or still drinks in cherry, cola, orange or root beer flavors.

In the same issue there is a display of a number of Canteen installations. The Servinette in the offices of the Mountain States Telephone Company, Salt Lake City, shows an impressive line-up of units — sandwiches, milk, coffee, cold drinks, hot food, pastry, candy and cigarettes.

By 1959, the Servinette pictures in the Canteen Quarterly were beginning to take on a "decorator" look. Instead of a plain panel framing the units, variations in color and design were being introduced.

Customusic, the Canteen-AMI Production Tool for Industry, can be seen making one of its first public bows in the Quarterly for the winter of 1959. Set against a background of musical notes are the words, "Music to work by—to Shop by—to Dine by." Further descriptions explain, "This is an entirely new concept in background music, programmed with a purpose to best meet the specific requirements of each location: factory, office, store, bank, hospital, or other public gathering place. Our established local Canteen Service Organizations install, service and maintain the integrated individual Customusic background music systems in each location."

There was news in that issue about a recently-inaugurated building program, involving forty-odd branches throughout the country, which had undertaken to incorporate identical facilities in each one. There are pictures of neat, trim buildings in Cincinnati, Boston, Hartford and Detroit.

Mr. William Swingler, vice president in charge of operations, announced in that Quarterly that the Canteen Mechanical School will be conducted again. Available to maintenance supervisors and personnel of all Canteen operations throughout the country, the two-week sessions are limited to twenty "students," to make personalized instruction possible. The school "keeps" as long as applicants continue to need instruction.

Servinettes were being given a two-page center spread in the middle of each Canteen Quarterly for quite a few issues, and they were gradually becoming more distinctive in design. A wood paneled background adds attractiveness to a Canteen Servinette installation at Lamson Manufacturing Company, Syracuse, New York, in the Quarterly for Winter 1960.

By Fall 1960, handsome Customusic displays were being set up at conventions and industrial shows and exhibitions throughout the world; and Canteen's London operation, Rowe Automatic Merchandising Co., Ltd., was turning out a coffee vendor that also makes "a remarkably good cup of tea, even by British standards. . . ." Nothing was standing still on the Canteen front.

Canteen Quarterly for Summer 1961 reveals that Automatic Merchandising has become thoroughly recognized in high places. In many parts of the country, April 1961 was designated "Automatic Merchandising Month" by proclamations signed by the governors of states.

Handsomer and handsomer have the Servinettes become, and now they are blossoming out, in Can-

teen Quarterly, with evolutionary new features. The Canteen Servinettes are still called Servinettes; but a new service called the "Counter Vend"—a combination of automatic and manual food services to meet countless industrial and institutional mass feeding requirements—has been added. Here is where Nationwide Food Service has come into the picture. All of the pieces are cut to fit together, and still leave room for individual development, in the Automatic Canteen Company's progress program.

For instance, Canteen Servinette is not being neglected. The dramatic new Celebrity line is featured in the Winter 1962, Quarterly. It is a long, streamlined unit, attractively compact and yet complete. Reading down the line, everything seems to be present and accounted for—Hot Drinks, Hot Foods, Candy, Sandwiches, Pastry and Cold Drinks. This is a far cry from the assortment of various-sized units that used to be lined up along the wall in business places. It's almost like comparing the newest electric refrigerators with old-fashioned ice boxes!

The election of Patrick L. O'Malley to the office of president of the Automatic Canteen Company was an announcement of importance in the Spring 1962 issue of Canteen Quarterly. Mr. O'Malley had spent all of his previous business life with Coca-Cola, progressing from route salesman to vice president and general sales manager of the Coca-Cola Company in Atlanta, Georgia. In speaking of his decision to accept the new position with Canteen Company, Mr. O'Malley stated that he had always been very happy in his work with Coca-Cola. "But the growth potentials of

not only the vending field generally, but also of Automatic Canteen in particular, offer an opportunity I could not pass up."

In referring to Mr. O'Malley's appointment by the board of directors, Canteen founder Leverone noted that they had sought many months "for a man of ability, ambition and experience in a business similar to ours. They finally found such a man in Mr. O'Malley. He fulfilled all the requirements set down by the board in full measure, and his experience is most unusual. . . . He understands the value of nickel, dime and small unit sales. . . . During the few months since he assumed the presidency of Canteen, he has shown an unusual grasp of our problems. . . . He is now carrying out the old successful tried and true policies of our company —those policies which have made Canteen the largest and most successful of its kind in the country."

There is enough fine reading material in the Quarterly to fill a number of books—Mr. Leverone's perceptive editorials — news about Canteen operations and promotions—pictures of Canteen installations on ships at sea, in parks and zoos, and in all the normal places—and history lessons about the birth and growth of great American industries, including Automatic Canteen.

Everything moves forward in that amazing Automatic Canteen Company of America; and Canteen Quarterly, under the editorship of R. A. Burleigh, keeps telling the story. It is a splendid little magazine —Canteen Quarterly!

Chapter Fifteen

'I Am an American'

You ask Nathaniel Leverone whether he is a Republican or a Democrat, and he will say, "I am neither. I am an American." He believes that the welfare of the country as a whole should be the concern of every American. "An American," he continues to say, "is a man who places the welfare of his nation above that of any political party or minority group to which he belongs."

When a man goes around making critical remarks about the way the country is being run, people immediately assume that he must have a political axe to grind. Speaking from a heart filled with solid Yankee traditions, Mr. Leverone is often described as a true American. He is a strong believer in the principles of the founding fathers of this country. He is quite unprejudiced in his criticism of the two major parties; both Democrats and Republicans have felt the barb of his pungent wit on occasion.

In principle, the New Deal program did not appeal to him; it appeared to be headed straight for the socialistic pattern that he believes has made second and

third-rate powers of some of the great nations of Europe. He strenuously objected to the idea of controls that required the destruction of crops and animals. "It is the divine right for any man to raise food. Whenever man has tried to usurp the functions of God, he is headed for disaster."

Nathaniel Leverone has often talked about "rewards" in his speeches. He believes that every man should be rewarded for his initiative. "When you get planned economists in, they take so much away from you that the incentive to work is gone. . . . Do you think we are going to have any more Edisons working far into the night to produce things? Do you think we are going to have writers work to produce things that cause men to think? All people in the past have worked for a reward in America. Reward is what motivates the human race. It takes countless forms but it is one of the reasons Americans become great. To one man, the privilege of climbing a mountain may be his 'reward.' My friend, Billy B. Van, would say that being able to help children is a 'reward.' . . . A great actor once told me that he was willing to act for nothing just to hear the applause of the audience."

In 1952, Nathaniel Leverone did not hesitate to say that he thought President Eisenhower's budget had some extravagant features. Any vision of a welfare state, in these United States, has the aspects of a nightmare to this vigilant American. The vitality of the country, he declares, depends upon following the traditions of faith in God, love of fellow man, the discipline of honest labor, and the right to fair competition. These, he believes, are on a level above political parti-

sanship—they are the principles that have made this the greatest nation in the world.

His major anxiety, it is apparent, is based on his belief that Americans will lose their greatest heritage if they exchange their freedom for hand-outs and doles. In his speeches and articles, he keeps repeating, "Those willing to exchange their freedom for economic security have always lost both." Instead of tackling each day's work with vigor and honest industry, they will putter their lives away, just marking time until they reach the age when they can lie back on their "welfare state" checks. They will live in their old ages, even when they are young, because that will be the grand climax toward which their minds will turn whenever they encounter frustrations. They will be drained of the desire to get out and accomplish great deeds, to seek great adventures and great rewards—here in a country in which a man can take an underdeveloped little business and expand it into a force to be reckoned with on the New York Stock Exchange, and in financial circles the world over. This is the land of opportunity, Nathaniel Leverone says, and he wants it to stay that way.

In an address at the First Presbyterian Church in Hollywood, California, Nathaniel Leverone contrasted the spirit and morals of modern America with those upon which the country was founded:

"It would do us all a lot of good if we went back to some of the shrines in America that mean something. Three weeks ago I was in Boston and went down to Plymouth Rock. I suppose I've been there twenty-five or thirty times. You ought to go there. It isn't a

very thrilling sight. You see a rock that's inside an iron fence. You get a thrill and you don't have to close your eyes to remember that storm-tossed poor little sailing vessel mooring there at the end of 1620 in a snow storm, and those people getting out, half-starved, half-frozen and kneeling down on that ground in the snow and thanking God.

"What do you suppose they were thanking God for? A barren land? Heaven knows that spot does look barren in the winter, even today, with those great rocks and those pine trees in the cold. When you visualize a lot of Indians with bows and arrows, you can understand it didn't look too tempting. But the Pilgrims were thanking God. There was no federal housing authority there to offer them homes, and no one was going to give them old age pensions or put them on relief—that's for sure. Nevertheless they knelt down and thanked God because here was a land of opportunity, opportunity which would come to them if they were willing to seek it.

"So they landed there, and how they suffered through that winter. Over half their number died, yet when spring came and the boat sailed back to England, not a single person, man, woman or child, would go back. They just stayed, and they stayed there another year and finally had made friends with some of the Indians. And you know when fall came, somebody had the idea that they ought to thank God for all the blessings that He had given them. Then they had a great feast which became our Thanksgiving Day. The friendly Indians brought them turkeys, and they had some corn and wild maize and some pumpkins they'd

raised. They set aside that day of prayer and thanksgiving to thank God for the great benefits they had.

"Now look at America today. Everybody is trying to get something for nothing. I think we ought to go back and review our history. Always you'll find that idea of God in the hearts of men who did something worthwhile for the nation. Of course they were successful. They were men and women of deep religious convictions and they were willing to work. As long as America has men and women who have religion in their hearts and who are willing to work, it can dominate the world. It can lead the whole world down the right paths rather than up the paths which now are being traveled."

That is the picture in the mind of Nathaniel Leverone when he sees indications that this country is being sapped of its vigor by pleasant dreams of a welfare state. He is not asking Americans to go back and freeze and starve and fight Indians at Plymouth Rock, but he wants them to think about it when they start feeling apathetic or sorry for themselves. Automatic Canteen Company of America is founded on the idea of making the American worker happy to be working—with soft music even! Back of it all is a basic fundamental that should not be overlooked. All of the Canteen products are designed to create an atmosphere in which the worker can reach the highest level of efficiency and productivity of which he is capable. A hungry worker will not be efficient; he will feel downtrodden. The soft hum of music in the background is designed to stimulate the creative imaginations of em-

ployees who are accustomed to thinking of their jobs as dull and monotonous.

Encouraging employees to develop their imaginations is a part of the Canteen program. Cash awards are reported regularly. In the fall of 1959, Canteen Quarterly printed a full-page story about the five-hundred-dollar check that Los Angeles Canteen employees, John Tottin and Murial Henry, won. Tottin's suggestion was a method for converting Canteen Drink Vendors to dispense ten-cent sized drinks instead of five-cent sized ones, and Mr. Henry helped him to perfect the idea. Mr. Nathaniel Leverone wants Americans to keep having ideas, to work for rewards in which they can take pride. Not merely for the sake of the reward, but because they are working toward an ideal. The individual's right to work toward an ideal is part of the country's heritage; it was here long before there were any Republicans, Democrats, Socialists, or Communists. It came over on the Mayflower.

Mr. Leverone is deeply dedicated to the belief that education does provide the most fruitful soil for leadership in America. In the old days in Chicago, he undoubtedly saw too many politicians who had barely squeaked through the sixth grade. As a long-time member of the Chicago Crime Commission, he has stated that criminal activities can best be curbed by non-political groups. "College bred policemen, paid worthwhile salaries, will also prove a big help," he has said. Educated people, he realizes, are going to form their own opinions. Because their minds are better disciplined, they will not so easily be led down the paths of bad judgment. An old trail-blazer himself, the Can-

teen founder has looked askance at some of the trails his fellow countrymen have chosen to take.

A man of rigid — sometimes almost stubborn — honesty, the Canteen founder chairman has practiced what he preached and has proved that complete integrity and success in business are compatible. A nonpartisan even in the business world, he has sometimes taken his fellow businessmen to task for setting bad examples with occasional "public-be-damned" attitudes.

When he spoke to the New England Sales Management Conference in 1948, he told his audience, "If any of you believe that you don't have to do a sales job on your goods because the world will buy them, why not go out and use it selling American business?"

"The consumer looks at business with a skeptical eye." He recalled the time when Teddy Roosevelt started his great investigation of the cosmetic and patent medicine business. "I can remember at that time it was particularly bad. Of course, stringent laws were passed but, in so doing, they reflected on business." Mr. Leverone believes that business people— and all Americans — should conduct themselves in ways that will not make it necessary to pass more laws to insure ethical behavior.

The practice of taking unfair advantage of competitors was another contention point with the Canteen man. He referred to a bad situation that developed during a highly competitive period in the late twenties. "It was illustrated probably in a better way than anything else in the cigarette ads that appeared along in 1928 and '29. Some of the ads reflected on another

industry. The industry that was attacked did not retaliate. But supposing they had, wouldn't we have had a mess, and wouldn't these consumer groups have capitalized on it?

"Why should any competitor attack a fellow competitor? Why should he go out of his way to attack somebody who is in a different line of endeavor completely? If business does that sort of thing, we will have chaos. There is no excuse for it."

The Leverone wit fairly leaps out of the next few excerpts, but underneath is wisdom worth pondering. "You listen to the radio and you hear a man with a voice like someone talking out of tune at midnight when he preaches the evils of gingivitis. The next night he tells you how you haven't a chance in the world of succeeding if you don't have better groomed hair. I love to think of Abe Lincoln. He did pretty well without having his hair too well groomed. Those are modern things, and consumer groups point those things out, as evidence that we misrepresent. . . . There is a toothpaste manufacturer who contends that women can win any fellow in the world if they will only use his toothpaste. . . . Why can't they simply say, 'Our toothpaste will make your mouth cool and sweet and sanitary'? . . . The shoe manufacturers don't knock each other. They try to tell you their shoes fit the feet and make walking comfortable."

In continuing, Mr. Leverone pointed out that the railroads are doing a great job. "They don't try to belittle aviation or the bus lines. They have competition and it is going to be terrific, but they say to you, 'Ride in safety and in comfort and enjoy the scenery as you

go by.' Aviation also does a fine job. They don't knock the railroads. They appeal to the spirit of adventure, and the speed you get. The bus lines emphasize the small cost of the trip and safety."

The automobile companies, according to the Canteen man, have done the finest job of salesmanship through their influence. "They made automobiles and then found the roads were too bumpy, so that your car might shake apart. What did they do? They sold the nation on building fine roads and maintaining them, thus helping to sell automobiles to the people. This is one of our big jobs. Through salesmanship we must steer away from criticism that comes to business as a whole, as a result of the actions of one or two firms here and there.

"How are we going to change it? We can only change it by leadership—leadership which must come from men like you."

Leaders? Over and over again, Nathaniel Leverone has emphasized the desperate need for leadership. A study of the lives of men of achievement will show that successful men are leaders, active on many fronts, dedicated to countless crusades for the betterment of their home communities, their states, their nation, and the world that they know intimately because they are leaders.

Successful men, in modern America, do not drowse by the television set at home every night, coddling themselves. Today they may be in Chicago, tomorrow in Washington, D. C., or in London or West Berlin—to do business, to attend meetings or speak at them, to promote international religious activities, to work

with government committees. This pattern is not contrived—the "phonies" always fall by the wayside—but it is a situation in which a man allows an innate interest to develop until it attains magnificent proportions. Many people are born with talents for leadership, but it is more comfortable to yawn and say, "Oh, let George do it!" Besides, a man has to be selfish about his own interests if he wants to get ahead. Besides, if he gets "sucked into" some of these "holy Joe" brotherhood causes, he might have to sit next to someone whose race or religion doesn't appeal to him. Besides, that outfit meets on nights when he wants to watch wrestling on TV.

So he lets George or Charley or Nat do it, because their consciences won't allow them to say "No" so easily—even though they are already the busiest fellows in town.

"Never in the history of this nation," Mr. Leverone told those salesmen a number of years ago, "has it needed leaders more than now—in business, in the pulpit, in the college, in political life—real leadership —men who have vision, men who are intelligent, men who are unselfish and men with courage."

As a chief spokesman for the free enterprise system, the chairman of Automatic Canteen continued, "We need men who have courage, vision and intelligence—men who are ready to lead you as a sacrifice. Out of each different industry there should be some leader who should inspire you men to go along with him, just as there should be national leaders the same way. But, more than that, we need leadership to sell this nation that American business, as it has been con-

stituted in the past, has performed one of the greatest services that has ever been performed for this nation —that it has made possible all this prosperity that we have here and, with it, has enabled people to be educated who might today still be poverty-stricken; that it has given opportunity for leadership and, at the same time, that it has helped preserve our liberty.

"That to me is the easiest thing to sell and the most valuable thing we have—that of keeping our institutions free, of having free enterprise.

"I say that is what your association should do. That is what every businessman should help to do—sell that idea. If that is done, there is the greatest guarantee that we may remain a free people."

Mr. Leverone is a born educator, and his lecture halls—from citadels of education through the convention and club banquet circuit—have covered the countryside. If anyone would push thumb tacks into all the places he has spoken, even on a large map, the map would be completely obliterated.

In many of his speeches, the founder of Canteen has voiced his indignation at the fact that history is not a required course in most of the colleges in the United States, and that the images of American heroes sometimes are distorted for the sake of sensationalism. American adults are cynical because they never have bothered to study the great principles on which the country was founded. They pass their cynicism on to their children, Mr. Leverone believes, and he had commented on it in this manner:

"They tell us that our youth is wrong, and is being

cynical and radical. You'd think that America had nothing to fall back on. Perhaps some criticisms are well founded but if there are any criticisms about our youngsters, the kids are not to blame for them. The so-called good citizens of America are to blame for the horrible example that has been set for them. For years I've been head of the Chicago Youth Week. It reaches one million children in Chicago from the primary grades through the high schools each year. We give awards of thirty scholarships every year and a hundred gold medals from the Junior Association of Commerce and Industry for various accomplishments.

"I know the youth of Chicago and I know they're fine. I know that they're more alert and more self-reliant, and I think more intelligent, than boys and girls were in my generation. They're better fed and better housed and better clothed. I see great hope in them if they are only led along the right road. But they hear denunciations of America. They are bewildered. They hear us whenever we have a problem. They hear us say the problem is easy to solve by giving money or signing treaties or passing laws. Isn't that silly? The most generous nation, the most kindly nation on the face of the earth, and yet the most gullible when it really believes that problems can be solved by passing laws, or giving money, or signing treaties."

"Moral, racial, religious and social problems," the Canteen man says, "are human problems. They cannot be solved by giving money, passing laws or signing treaties. Neither can they be solved in the physics or chemistry laboratory, or with an engineering slide rule. Because these problems are human problems,

they can only be solved by trying to understand people."

When Nathaniel Leverone was scheduled to talk to the Rotary Club in Boston in September, 1955, his appearance was hailed with stories fore and aft in "The Hub," Boston Rotary's weekly bulletin. Perhaps the summary of Mr. Leverone's talk, as "The Hub" reported it comes closest to describing the man, his philosophy, and his unique talent for getting a message across:

"Rotarian Leverone proved to be a gracious gentleman with a ready flow of vivid words and stimulating thoughts. He showed a wide variety of information and interest, ranging from the subject of understanding to what is evidently his deepest concern, the preservation of American ideals. Yet, all of his observations were linked to a vital need for understanding: understanding of ourselves, of our fellowmen, and of the threats to our country.

"The address was barbed with straight-faced, devastating humor. Many a public figure and practice were victims of the speaker's casual gems of sly wit.

"The speaker lauded a sense of humor as one of the most essential qualities for the development of understanding among men, and he deplored the decline of humor generally but particularly in Europe.

"He lamented the lack of understanding which led people to put their faith in charters, treaties, alliances and armed might to solve the problems of the world. The speaker pointed out that good will, morality, love of fellowman, the Four Freedoms, and the like cannot

be created by legislation; nor can friendship be purchased. World problems are caused by man and can only be solved by man through intimate association and the development of mutual understanding.

"Mr. Leverone found American liberty our most valuable heritage and the one most seriously threatened from within and from without, giving many illustrations. The thirty-seven per cent vote cast in Boston's recent mayorality primary was cited as a glaring example of our failure to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. The dangers of foreign importations such as 'a planned economy' were mentioned graphically.

"In conclusion, the speaker paid tribute to the contribution Rotary is making to the development of understanding through its promotion of fellowship among diverse peoples and through the practice of its ideal of service above self."

The Canteen founder and Canteen Company were constantly capturing the imaginations of editors and reporters and were often sought as subjects for magazine and newspaper features. The development of Canteen was considered "a great success story," and "the outstanding leader in the automatic merchandising field" inspired some nimble-witted descriptive phrases. A "Time" item, in the issue for June 11, 1956, referred to Nathaniel Leverone as the "Keeper of the coins," which was often used in subsequent references to him.

Sometimes public speakers have created a stir by not remembering what city or state they are in, but the alert-minded Chicagoan always knew where he was standing, even though he often spoke two or three

times in one day, in one or more cities, to widely divergent groups. He confesses that he has sometimes feigned "absent-mindedness" in his role as a "stuffed shirt deflater" at Anti-Superstition Society meetings, studying the speaker of the evening for a long, anxious moment, as though he has forgotten his name completely.

With all his presidencies and chairmanships, it's amazing the way Mr. Leverone has had his wits about him. As far as is known, he has never banged down a gavel to open a meeting—and then had to lean over and ask someone what group was present.

In addition to the multitudinous preoccupations already mentioned, Canteen founder chairman Leverone has been a director of LaSalle National Bank since 1942; of "Finance Publishing, Inc." since 1941; Chicago Federal Savings & Loan Association since 1933; and Intelligence Publishing Company since 1947. His clubs are Casino; Mid-America; Saddle and Cycle; University; Union League and Executives of Chicago; Capitol Hill of Washington; and Bath and Tennis, and Everglades of Palm Beach. He is a life member of the Art Institute and of the Chicago Historical Society.

At every opportunity, in his talks to American business people, the Canteen man has stressed the subject of employing the handicapped, of swinging open the doors of industry and giving them a chance to rehabilitate themselves.

Traffic safety is one of Nathaniel Leverone's chief concerns; he takes pride in the safe-driving programs instituted by Canteen. Year after year Canteen Quarterly tells the story of award-winning safety records

piled up by Canteen drivers who know that slaughter on the highway is not necessary. There are Canteen Safety Limerick Contests, and various circulars are distributed. A "Driver's Safety Manual" was issued to all Canteen drivers from coast to coast in the summer of 1961. Canteen drivers strive to be eligible for the National Safety Council's Annual Fleet Safety Awards. The entire Los Angeles Canteen branch achieved that honor in 1961. "Other aspects of the safety program are being developed at this time," the Quarterly notes, "including the awarding of personalized metal plaques which will be affixed to the outside of Canteen vehicles. These plaques will include the driver's name and the number of years of safe driving he has attained."

Mr. Leverone rarely finds time to watch television, naturally. He believes that about twenty-five per cent of the programs are injurious to the youth of the nation if they register what they watch. The same programs would be injurious to about ten per cent of the adult population. He sees no reason whatever for certain types of programs which are not informative, humorous, inspiring or entertaining. He has noted that there are many programs, however, which do furnish an unsual source of diversion, provide information, and make a contribution.

Nathaniel Leverone, it has been indicated, is a man of honors as well as honor. Hailing his achievements are enough plaques and citations to cover the walls of a large room. All of them are related to activities in which he has been conscientiously involved. A Chica-

goan of recognized stature, his picture hangs in the Merchandise Mart's "Gallery of Greats."

Founder chairman Leverone was honored by the Citizens of Greater Chicago with the "Award of Merit" in 1960. The members of "Citizens of Greater Chicago" represent leading civic, philanthropic, religious and educational organizations. Their non-partisan purpose, which seeks to educate citizens for action, has been concentrated on a drive to break the link between crime and politics. The "Award of Merit" is presented annually to a Chicagoan who has been selected for outstanding civic achievement.

Another notable salute is the citation "in recognition of his generous and outstanding service to the Heart Fund and for continuing interest in the fight against heart disease" from the Chicago Heart Association. Nathaniel Leverone sits on the board of governors and the executive committee of the Chicago Heart Association.

If he were a Swede from Minnesota, there would be nothing strange about another honor that came to him in 1962. He was elected president of the Chicago Chapter of the American-Scandinavian Foundation. Since the purpose of the organization is the promotion of good relations between the United States and the Scandinavian countries through a variety of educational and cultural programs, a New England Yankee can be completely in sympathy with its aims and aspirations. Of course, he had already established a very harmonious American-Scandinavian relationship when he married a lovely young lady named Martha Ericsson.

On one rare occasion, the man whose speaker introductions were calculated to make guests of honor squirm, had the tables turned on him. Invited to New Orleans as a Chicagoan—which was considered fairly neutral territory—he proudly admitted that he hailed from New England originally. He was introduced, with uproarious gusto, as a "Damnyankee!"

The transplanted New Englander is probably the most actively loyal alumnus that Dartmouth has ever had. There never has been a minute's doubt that Nathaniel Leverone is a graduate of Dartmouth College at Hanover, New Hampshire, and that he is fervently proud of that fact. As president of the Chicago Dartmouth Alumni Association, he made it one of the most forceful groups in the country. Now he has stepped out of this activity, leaving it to more recent graduates.

His annual address to members of the Amos Tuck School of Business Administration at Dartmouth has become traditional over the past twenty years. (He really stays with these things.) His remarks about business, finance, and the political situation, which are interspersed with typical Leverone wit, are considered the grand climax to the senior year for Tuck students.

Mr. Leverone has received three major honors as a Dartmouth man. He was given a special award by the Dartmouth Alumni Association for making the country "Dartmouth-conscious." The "Dartmouth Pow-Wow," which he organized and conducted in Chicago, was the first full-scale national convention ever held by a leading institution of learning. Its purpose was to emphasize the uniquely national character of Dart-

mouth, which attracts students from every state in the union.

Nathaniel Leverone later was honored with the Reynolds Award for his outstanding leadership in fund-raising drives for his alma mater.

At the Alumni Council dinner in Hanover, New Hampshire, on June 14, 1961, distinguished Dartmouth alumnus Leverone was presented with the Dartmouth Alumni Award. On that occasion, Charles F. McGoughran, president of the Alumni Council of Dartmouth College, said that it was bestowed "in recognition of your stature in the world of affairs and your devotion to Dartmouth." Orton H. Hicks, vice president of Dartmouth College, recalled that recipients of the Dartmouth Alumni Award considered it a warmly personal honor because "the Alumni Award is given to one Dartmouth man as a mark of respect and affection by all other Dartmouth men."

On a memorable Thursday late in January of this year, Mr. and Mrs. Leverone and their daughter, Meredith, arrived in Springfield, Massachusetts, and were met by Dartmouth officials. The next evening, January 18th, Nathaniel Leverone was honored by Dartmouth College at a football victory dinner. Since Mr. Leverone had never played football at Dartmouth, there must have been another reason for his being there. There was.

John Sloan Dickey, president of Dartmouth and chairman of the board of trustees, took that occasion to announce that the new Dartmouth Field House would be named for Nathaniel Leverone, who had underwritten the $1,500,000 cost of the building.

Naming the fieldhouse for him was not Mr. Leverone's idea and was more honor than he wanted. "I did this because I wanted to," he explained.

The Nathaniel Leverone Field House, which the Hartford Times called "really sump'n" in a January 22nd story, is fully enclosed. With a seating capacity of ten thousand, it can be used for track, baseball, football, and even commencement exercises in rainy weather. The architect for the magnificent structure was Pier Luigi Nervi of Rome, who designed the famous 1960 Olympic buildings.

The Hartford Times interviewer asked Nathaniel Leverone if he had been an athlete at Dartmouth early in the century.

"No," he said. "I loved sports, especially baseball. I was never good enough to make the teams. But I always kept in shape, never dissipated and loved walking."

The discussion about sports aroused some questions about Mr. Leverone's former affiliation with the Kansas City Athletics. He still enjoys watching a baseball game occasionally, but the death of Arnold Johnson in 1960 made him feel as though his association with the Kansas City A's would not be quite the same again. Kansas City wanted him to stay as chairman of the board, but he sold his stock in the club back to the owners for exactly what it had cost him.

"They were lovely people," he says, "and I didn't want to profit at their expense, although I had some good offers."

Arnold Johnson's untimely death in 1960 stunned

the Canteen organization, of which he had been vice president of the board and president of Automatic Canteen.

In the spring of 1959 Mr. Leverone received a very appropriate honorary degree — Doctor of Oratory — from Curry College in Boston. He also gave the principal address, although it probably was not necessary to prove that he had earned that degree. About that time, according to Canteen Quarterly, Mr. and Mrs. Leverone were part of a group of distinguished Chicagoans who welcomed Queen Elizabeth of England to the city during the St. Lawrence Seaway dedication ceremonies.

In 1961, Mr. Leverone was awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Culver-Stockton College, Canton, Missouri. He had been a member of the board of trustees of the college for a number of years. In the honorary doctoral citation, presented to President Fred Helsabeck by Dean C. Carpenter at the special convocation, Mr. Leverone is described as a man who "has made a distinctive and creative contribution as a leader in the field of business." In addition to all his other achievements, accomplishments, affiliations and good works, the citation notes that he was "the former chairman of the board and director of the Kansas City Athletics baseball team and was a key figure in the process of geographic expansion of this national sport" —a provocative touch of whimsey to find in an academic citation.

The Culver-Stockton Doctoral Degree was conferred in Quincy, Illinois, where Mr. Leverone was the

featured speaker at the annual meeting in honor of fifty-four Quincy and Adams county high school seniors who became award members of the Society for Academic Achievement that spring. The society, which is the high school counterpart of Phi Beta Kappa, is "Dedicated to a college education for every talented high school graduate." This would be a project with which Mr. Leverone would be very much in accord. As usual, he had still another job—as member of the advisory committee of the Society for Academic Achievement—to keep him busy in his "spare time."

On May 16, 1962, Dr. George Truman Carl, the minister of the First Methodist Church in Mason City, Iowa, wrote a letter to his friend, Nathaniel Leverone, telling him:

"Morningside College (of Sioux City, Iowa) has conferred upon me a very high honor indeed. It has asked me to prepare the citation and to present you with your honorary degree on Sunday, June 3rd. There is no man in the entire nation whom I have respected, admired and loved more deeply than I have you. You have been a great inspiration and of tremendous assistance as I have endeavored to project my ministry into the hearts of mankind irrespective of creed, class or conditions. It is not a highly-paid profession, but it holds within itself compensations whose market value cannot be always determined. You have helped to ease the road and the load in this point. . . ."

The citation, itself, is a beautifully eloquent statement of understanding and devotion, with Dr. Carl's own ideals woven into it:

CITATION:
THE HONORARY DEGREE, DOCTOR OF LAWS

For Mr. Nathaniel Leverone

By George Truman Carl

Presented by President J. Richard Palmer

MORNINGSIDE COLLEGE, JUNE 3, 1962

"Nathaniel Leverone—native of New England but a citizen of the world; courageous crusader for all that is right, clean and honorable in personal affairs and human relationships; graduate of Dartmouth College in 1906, Phi Beta Kappa; he has gloriously upheld all the rich traditions of scholarship in the sheer splendor of his monumental achievements; founder of the Automatic Canteen Company of America in 1929, easily one of the most dynamic of all great corporations in the United States; firm and fast friend of all mankind, irrespective of age, place or circumstances; a formidable leader for many years in the suppression of crime in the City of Chicago; a lover and leader in the promotion of all the arts, particularly in the field of music, serving on the Board of Governors of the Chicago Opera Company and active in establishment of the Lyric Opera Association of Chicago; an integral part and partner of the American Bible Society; Council of Laymen's Activities; of Chicago's Annual Youth Week (President for fourteen years).

"Of particular significance today in Sioux City, with its great Goodwill Industries, is the fact that he was President of Goodwill Industries of Chicago, 1943-45, and Director since 1940, and active

in promoting of Goodwill Industries throughout the nation.

"Until its recent sale, the Chairman of the Board and a Director of the Kansas City Athletic Baseball Team; exceedingly sensitive to all that pertains to the hurts in the breakdowns of the human bodies, having served zealously in securing funds for cerebral palsy and heart research; member of the Rotary International. A speaker and author of note, Nathaniel Leverone exemplifies the philosophy of the Christ, of seeking only to serve for the betterment and beautification of human life at all levels and in all categories. Morningside College of Sioux City, Iowa, counts it a high honor indeed to confer upon this distinguished and illustrious citizen of the Nation the Honorary Degree, Doctor of Laws."

In the continuing procession of academic salutes, Illinois Wesleyan University at Bloomington conferred an Honorary Doctor of Humanities Degree upon Nathaniel Leverone when he delivered the commencement address there on June 2, 1963.

Dr. Carl's comment about the ministry's not being a highly-paid profession indicates that he knew about the one "failure" in Nathaniel Leverone's life. Herb Graffis, the lively chronicler of the Chicago scene, devoted his column to that subject in the "Sun-Times" for December 30, 1957. Titling the column "Parson's Pay a Sin?" Mr. Graffis mentioned that Mr. Leverone was resigning as president of the Anti-Superstition Society, after having gone merrily along for twenty-five years, signing important contracts on Friday the

thirteenth, walking under ladders, petting black cats, and leaving a trail of broken mirrors behind him.

But, a success at everything else, his campaign to get salary increases for ministers had been a flop. "Leverone," Mr. Graffis wrote, "bumped into one extensive superstition that couldn't be laughed off—the superstition that a congregation shouldn't pay a minister enough so he and his family might indulge in the soft sins of the flesh and vanities, such as new clothes for everyone in the clergyman's family."

Mr. Graffis didn't know where the superstition originated, "but it certainly resulted in driving the money-changers out of the temple on preacher's pay day.

"It doesn't say in the fine print that a minister who has a wife and children should take vows of poverty but for too long in too many cases that's been nearly the outcome of many careers as shepherds of the Lord. There has been some improvement since preacher's wives had to work miracles of stretching the parson's portion of the collection about as far as the wine was stretched in the miracle of the wedding feast. But the improvement hasn't been enough to offset the shrinking dollar."

"Leverone," Mr. Graffis continued, "isn't dismally discouraged by the failure of the more-pay-for-the-preacher campaign to score as well as he had expected. He is still hoping an escalator clause will become standard procedure in all hiring of ministers.

"Nat ventures to guess that the long continued policy of low pay for so many preachers has been the

reason for one tardy blessing: the sons of many ministers have been conspicuously successful businessmen. Those boys, soundly educated and of good character, got all they wanted of being short of money when they were growing up."

It has been noted that Nathaniel Leverone expressed his devotion to good music by supporting musical activities. His love of books is demonstrated by the fact that he is a member of Phi Beta Kappa. In spite of all the reading he has done, he still reads even fine print without glasses. Several years ago, "The Chicago American" queried leading Chicagoans about masterpieces of literature, sculpture, music and painting that had inspired them. Whom did Nathaniel Leverone choose? Robert Frost, the late and great New England poet! (Who also taught at Dartmouth for a time.) Mr. Leverone manifested his enthusiasm for Robert Frost and his beloved New England in some lyrical phrases of his own:

"No one knows more than I how truly the poetry of Robert Frost expresses the magnificent scenery of New England because I spent my youth among the glorious green hills of New Hampshire. How beautifully Robert Frost expresses my feeling about New Hampshire in this verse:

'How high I'd thrust the peaks in summer snow
'To tap the upper sky and draw a flow
'Of frosty night air on the vale below
'Down from the stars to freeze the dew as starry.'

"The majesty of nature's handiwork as seen in these hills inspires and gives courage and understand-

ing to face and solve problems without fear or discouragement. When one has worked closely for many years, as I have, with youth activities and philanthropic activities or business, I have left the city for my native hills and found that where nature fills one with the sheer joy of living human frustrations disappear. . . .

"The majesty and everchanging beauty of the hills offer inspiration throughout the year. . . . In the summer the hills brighten as the flowers blossom to their fullest. Fall, too, has its own beauty and stimulation, as the leaves ripen and take on their brilliant hues. Then the final scene in this impressive drama of the seasons comes when God's mantle of snow covers the earth with the blanket under which all nature will sleep until spring."

A gem of many facets is Nathaniel Leverone, who made a success of business and then devoted his life to "the other fellow." A number of books could be written on the story of his business life. A similar number could deal with his speeches and editorials, his humanitarian activities, and all the honors that have come to him. With all due respect to biographical details, perhaps the interviewer from "The Hartford Times" summed him up best in a few words, in the story about that new Nathaniel Leverone Field House at Dartmouth: "We could use more Mister Leverones in this sometimes rough, unthinking, unfeeling world. May his tribe increase."

At this point in industrial history, almost any reasonable item of food or merchandise can be dispensed from an automatic vendor. When the Automatic Can-

teen Company of America opened its 1963 convention, founder chairman Leverone was on hand to deliver the keynote address. Canteen Quarterly reports: "He recalled the policies which motivated the company at its inception, and detailed some of the difficulties which the new enterprise encountered when it first tried to bring ethics, honesty, and good business practices to a field which previously had been predominantly racket ridden. His talk was replete with humor, and he received a standing ovation at its conclusion.

"Mr. Leverone also emphasized the importance of entering into the activities of one's community, one's church, organized charities, and other worthwhile movements. He stressed the principle that he has always applied, that of engaging in such activities for what one can give, not for what one can get. As he pointed out, those who go into such activities for completely unselfish reasons are the ones who actually benefit the greatest in the long run."

For every man who wants to improve society, there are thousands who must be convinced that change is healthy—that it is an indication of progress. "Automation" has been a bugaboo word, ever since the Industrial Revolution, Mr. Leverone has declared on numerous occasions. The idea of machines taking over and leaving men standing idle, has not proved the menace it appeared to be. Each new development has opened new fields of employment, consumer demand and industrial expansion. The Canteen installations did not replace retail clerks. They created a candy-

eating habit among factory and office employees, and it carried over into leisure hours.

On the Founder's Page, in the 1962 Winter issue of Canteen Quarterly, Mr. Leverone continues to dispense boundless wisdom for our time. In "The Key to Higher Employment," he details the strides that the vending industry has made in multiplying job opportunities, and he prefaces his comments with this "businessman's declaration of independence:" ". . . The way to stimulate employment is to permit business and industry to create more jobs by removing deterrents to imagination and initiative which now exist." He cites "the favorable effect that one company, Automatic Canteen Company, has had upon the employment picture over the past thirty years . . ."

"Consider . . . the number of persons who are gainfully employed today solely as a result of the growth of the vending industry which was started by Automatic Canteen.

"First, of course, is the number of people actually employed by the vending operators. This totals some 60,000." On a breathtaking "verbal tour" through countless other industries affected by the vending machine business, Mr. Leverone picked up the 25,000 employees in vending machine manufacturing companies, the suppliers of all the parts and materials that are needed in the production of vending machines, and the tremendous number of workers on farms, in processing plants, and in candy factories who keep producing the more than fifteen million candy bars that are sold from automatic vendors every day—and so on, and on.

"The automatic merchandising field," Mr. Leverone emphasized, "has created entire new areas of markets so that the volume of business done through machines today, amounting to a current level of over three billion dollars a year, is largely a market which simply would not exist if there were no vending industry." Candy bars, for instance, are "impulse purchases." If they weren't there, in handy vending machines, people would do without them.

"Estimates of the total number of people who are working today, because of the growth and development of the vending field, run as high as 750,000 to a million persons," Mr. Leverone noted. ". . . Recapitulating, it boils down to this. The answer to the unemployment problem is not reducing the productiveness of individuals, but in giving Americans every opportunity to put their imagination and industry to productive work which not only provide more jobs but also create entire new industries and fields of service."

Nathaniel Leverone does not rest on his laurels and his fine record of achievement. He is still vitally concerned with the future of Automatic Canteen Company, the automatic merchandising industry in general, and the welfare of his country and his fellow men.

"The Greek Week," Interfraternity Club magazine, marveled at the amazing number of activities that claimed Nat Leverone's attention. "There are few men around Chicago who have multiplied themselves as has Nat Leverone. His trenchant wit, his overpowering oratory and his public service have drawn to him hundreds of friends in all walks of life, from the highest down to the lowest. The walls of his

spacious office in the Merchandise Mart are covered with signed photographs of individuals whose names are easily recognized as prominent citizens.

"But success and recognition have not dulled Nat's human side. He hasn't forgotten his old friends nor has he lost his great zeal for living. He is the type who will always stay young, who, like old wine, will improve with the years, and will leave a mark equalled by few."

A man of dignity and complete poise, he still is master of the subtle witticism and the velvet phrase. Trim and spare, he walks his usual six miles or more each day. He has never cared to drink or smoke. If you eat lunch with him, you may notice that he prefers to begin and end the meal with fruit—strawberries are still his favorite dessert.

A sterling American, with a sterling quality set of ideals about business and his fellow men, the founder of Automatic Canteen is the best advertisement for the American free enterprise system that the country could have. In the final analysis, Nathaniel Leverone is everything that you would expect a Dartmouth gentleman to be.

Articles Taken From *Canteen Quarterly* by Mr. Leverone

Nathaniel Leverone's editorials in the Canteen Quarterly have made emphatic impressions on readers in industrial, political and educational circles. The following four are representative of his painstaking awareness of some deficiencies and contradictions that he has observed in the "world's most enlightened and humane nation."

DEATH STALKS THE HIGHWAYS

A cry of fright, the sudden screeching of brakes, the unforgettable thud of a car striking a human body and then perhaps the glimpse of a fleeing hit and run driver leaving behind him a crushed, shapeless, bleeding mass which was once a laughing, carefree child or a grownup who filled a useful place in the life of the community. Then follows the usual routine—the jury's verdict of accidental death and the anguish of a bereaved family mourning over the loss of a loved one.

This tragic scene is repeated over a hundred times a day in this country and no effective measure taken to

stop it. Accidental Death! That term now is almost synonymous with murder on the highways.

The motorist is held blameless for killing a child because the youngster was careless and yet carelessness is probably the most outstanding characteristic of childhood and should be recognized as such. Or perhaps the victim is an adult who is a bit feeble or whose hearing is defective so his death is held an accident and the slaughter is encouraged to go on.

The most disgraceful blot on the escutcheon of the world's most enlightened and humane nation is this wanton and senseless destruction of human life. It is worse than pestilence or war. If you do not believe it, study figures furnished by the National Safety Council. During the last twenty years, over 650,000 were killed and about 25,000,000 injured by motorists in this country. In all our major wars—the Revolution, 1812, Mexican, Civil, Spanish and World Wars I and II—the total duration of which was approximately twenty years—our losses and killed were only about 600,000. All of our major disasters, such as floods, conflagrations, earthquakes during the entire history of this nation have been incidents as far as the loss of human life is concerned, as compared to the terrible toll taken by motor cars.

What an indictment of our nation that in our generosity we spend millions upon millions of dollars for providing and maintaining institutions to preserve the lives of the hopelessly incurable, the physically unfit, the helplessly insane and others who never can be anything but burdens to society, and yet we hardly

heed the inexcusable slaughter of useful citizens or their children whose only crime has been playing in the streets when they have no neighborhood playgrounds or crossing highways in fun or perhaps to do errands for their mothers.

A crime wave hits a great city with a hundred holdups and a dozen murders, and the people are aroused to a frenzy and demand protection which forces the spending of millions of dollars but they do little or nothing to prevent the ceaseless destruction of human life by motorists.

The tragic aspect of this whole picture is that it can be corrected so easily. This is not a theory. It is a proved fact . . . proved by the lives which have been saved through the educational programs conducted by the National Safety Council. The most striking examples of the benefits that can thus be obtained are the records of truck fleets whose drivers are the men who are at the wheel under all conditions, and whose skill and experience are repeatedly tested to the breaking point by road or weather conditions . . . or by the thoughtlessness of other drivers they meet on the road. Yet they consistently turn in safety records which, if equalled on an accident-per-mile basis by passenger car drivers, would sharply cut the tragic highway death toll.

Yes, automobiles and trucks CAN be driven without making them instruments of murder, when motorists go back to the American tradition of courtesy, consideration and fair play.

—From CANTEEN Quarterly, Winter 1952

THE DISAPPEARING VIRTUE OF RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION

This is an era of mounting tensions, worries, complexes and fears. Yet disappearing rapidly from the scene is the virtue which played so vital a part in the founding and development of our country, and that saved our nation in past crises and disasters . . . righteous indignation on the part of its citizens.

First, I want to make certain that you understand exactly what I mean by "Righteous Indignation," because, as is the case with so many terms, its meaning has become distorted so that frequently it is given a connotation of bigotry and meddling. Properly, "righteous indignation" is the ability to be aroused to anger by wrongs or injustices which happen to OTHERS, and gives the moral courage to take as forceful action to correct them as one would if they were purely personal matters.

There lies the trouble today.

Americans become angry today if their own taxes are raised, because that costs them money which could buy them added luxuries. But how many become aroused on the subject of taxation because of the harm being done to our national economy and to generations yet to be born, as the result of governmental waste and profligacy? Very few indeed. We become incensed if a young hoodlum throws a brick through our window or a reckless teen-age driver sideswipes our fender. Yet murders, assaults, senseless vandalism and acts of unbelievable brutality by youthful criminals leave most of us unmoved if they happen to others. And we lose sight of the fact that we would not have so serious

a problem today if enough citizens had risen up in their wrath years ago against the conditions in our law-making bodies, our enforcement agencies, and our courts, which have made widespread juvenile delinquency possible.

Most people pay attention to federal legislation only when it concerns them personally, and ignore completely bills which give away our national resources and accelerate inflation and strike at the free enterprise system. Yet every one of us is the loser when inflation destroys the value of our savings and insurance, and whittles away at the purchasing power of fixed incomes, robbing us of the security hoped for, planned for and worked for in pension and retirement programs. Dishonesty and hypocrisy in public officials are deplored by many of our so-called "better citizens" who fail to become indignant enough to assert themselves by voting the offenders out of office. The voters who are controlled by ward bosses or political machines and members of selfish minority groups turn out en masse on election day to vote for candidates they have been instructed to elect. On the other hand, citizens who have the most at stake in good government stay away from the polls by the millions.

The greatest danger of all is the encroachment on our liberties through misinterpretation of the meanings of our Constitution.

Cynical politicians have frequently stated that most people cannot be aroused to vote FOR a candidate or a cause, but only AGAINST someone or something. If this is true, certainly there are so many people and conditions to vote against in every election

these days that a big turnout of indignant voters should be assured. If all who are interested in good government would exercise their priceless privilege of the franchise, they could win every election.

From the time the signers of the Declaration of Independence penned their names beneath the inspiring closing words, "we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor," our nation's history has been filled with examples of wrongs being righted and disasters averted by public conscience aroused by leaders who dared to place right and principle above selfish advantage. Slavery was abolished because enough Americans became indignant about what was happening to someone else. William Jennings Bryan was defeated by an aroused nation in his campaign for the Presidency despite his radical claims that "free silver" would solve the financial crisis the nation faced in the nineties. Here again, enough voters who realized the unsoundness of Bryan's proposal went to the polls.

How different today. What has happened to the American people? Have they lost sight of PRINCIPLES entirely in their headlong pursuit of money and pleasure? Have they concentrated so much on temporary selfish benefits that they have forgotten that what is best for the nation as a whole is best for each and every one of us? Have they been lulled to sleep by the artificial benefits of a fake prosperity? Are they afraid to take a stand in defense of the right for the single reason that it IS right? I know that is not a popular role to play. Neither was Cato popular when he began ending every speech in the Roman Senate

and Forum with the words, "Carthage must be destroyed" . . . but three years after his death the seed he had planted bore fruit and the Roman forces did destroy Carthage.

So can the righteous indignation of real Americans destroy the forces which are inevitably plunging this nation into runaway inflation, creating contempt of laws and the rights of others, and killing the incentive system.

Let's get angry about things that aren't right . . . angry enough to make any who are abusing their positions in government, business, labor, or any other activities, toe the line and bring America back on the road to greatness on which its founders started it. Do not forget that "vox populi, vox Dei" is still true, but the voice of God is too seldom heard in Washington. Let your voice be heard there, and in your state legislatures and your city councils, by writing those who represent you in legislative and administrative posts. Let them know where you stand on important issues. An aroused public opinion can force our leaders to bring us back to the paths of righteousness from which we have so sadly strayed.

Let us re-discover the power of righteous indignation.

—From CANTEEN Quarterly, Fall 1958

* * * * *

THE MENACE OF MEDIOCRITY

A demoralizing force has struck at the very roots of the American way of life. It brainwashes the young, it destroys initiative in industry, it frustrates the am-

bitious, it impedes our nation's progress, and it is a threat to our very existence in years to come. This force is the enthronement of mediocrity as the pattern to which all must conform.

You see it on all sides. In schools, the dull student must not be failed even though he has not made passing grades, because it might give him a complex. By the same token, the brilliant pupil is given no incentive to excel because the competition upon which all with initiative thrives has been largely eliminated. Even in such exact studies as mathematics, where right and wrong are definitely determinable matters, grading is often done on the curve, rather than on a basis of 100% accuracy. Many schools are dispensing with grades because poor grades might give the recipient an inferiority complex. No wonder many of our college graduates spell atrociously, know little or nothing about grammar, and cannot write a legible hand. The fact that many who are entering college are not able to read well enough to assimilate their teaching has become a national scandal.

In industry, production generally has come to be paced to the speed of the slowest, most inefficient worker, and those who would work faster because of the pride they take in their jobs, are even penalized for doing so. Inspectors are often forbidden to reject inferior products on the objective basis of their quality, but must protect the inferior worker by rejecting only a small percentage of the products he turns out. Employers are often prohibited from rewarding good workers with bonuses or raises based on merit and productive capacity. And who can blame a worker

for becoming discouraged and adopting a "what's the use" attitude?

What a pity that the greatest single force in the world's progress seems to be in its last dying stages. The desire to excel, to rise above one's surroundings, to create something better, has always been the source of every advance mankind has made. Had embryo man been governed by the same destructive thinking that is so prevalent today, we would still be going around on all fours as we made our way out of our caves.

What has happened to our educators, our civic leaders, our labor leaders and our business men that they cannot see the perils in the course of today's thinking? Cannot they recognize the danger signs in the young people entering the business world, whose sole goal is security and a good retirement plan? Why, they are making hopeless old people of these youths. In generations past, what young man even thought of retiring when he took his first job? But today, the attitude seems to be, "Well, I will do the minimum I have to, and will work the necessary number of years, but my real interest is in retiring on a pension."

Of course there are some voices crying in the wilderness, of which mine is one. It seems, however, that our listeners are becoming fewer and fewer, and the trend to mediocrity as the norm is snowballing to dismaying proportions.

We would expect this acceptance of mediocrity in a communistic or socialistic nation because that is the end result of oppression and extreme regimentation. But in a nation whose foundations rest on free enter-

prise and individual initiative, it is an astounding retrogression.

Ameria was founded by men and women who would endure any hardships, make any sacrifice, expend any effort to gain their ends of freedom of action and unlimited opportunity. It was settled by the more ambitious and energetic of all nations, for only the ones with the drive and urge for advancement had the courage to take the big step away from mediocrity and slavish security to the new world with its hazards.

Yet no real opportunity is ever entirely free of hazard, for opportunity's knock is answered only by those with the courage and self-assurance to risk the unknown. All that opportunity ever offers is the chance to show what one can do to earn rewards . . . never an easy, sure road to mediocre security.

Perhaps this is the beginning of the decadence of which this nation has been accused by its envious rivals. Certainly, the spread of the worship of mediocrity and evading of responsibility and opportunity can lead to decadence.

Let us recognize this danger and take steps to combat it. Let our teachers strive to inspire the youth of our nation to excel for the sake of excelling. Let them reinstate the spirit of competition. We must eliminate the too broad interpretation of "all men are created equal" as it is presently defined to restrict everyone to a pattern. Certainly all men ARE equal in the sight of God and man as far as their inalienable rights are concerned. But some are stronger than others, some taller, some more intelligent, some more energetic, some more imaginative, some more honest. In fairness

to such, and to allow them the equality to which all men are entitled, they must be inspired, permitted and urged to give their talents full play.

Mediocrity is contrary to nature's laws and, far from ever being a goal to attain, must be considered a dire fate to be avoided at all costs.

—From CANTEEN Quarterly, Fall 1960

* * * * *

GOVERNMENT IS NO CAMPUS

In sincere admiration and respect for professors who dedicate their lives to the instruction of the young people of America, I believe I would rate among the most appreciative. However, I am very much disturbed with a trend which has become all too prevalent in recent years. This is removing the professors from their chosen field, the field for which they have prepared and trained and in which they have gained experience, and projecting them into key positions in areas where theory is not enough. Most of these transplantations have been encouraged by government officials during the past 30 years.

Starting with the so-called "brain trust," we have seen the constantly increasing infiltration of the political world, as well as the business world, by men whose theoretical viewpoint is excellent but whose practical experience in most cases is nil.

Here we have a group of men who throughout their college and university careers have specialized in limited teaching or research fields and have never been at all concerned with the practical economical phase of their work. They never have had to meet a payroll,

or had experience in handling hundreds or thousands of employees. Yet they are suddenly projected into positions where they influence or direct the dissipation of our national resources by fantastic give-away programs which in too many cases are completely without adequate control. Perhaps in theory some of these programs are worth proposing, but the final decisions and administration should be left to practical men with successful experience in the countries and other areas where the funds are to be devoted. If the theorists are permitted to carry them out, very often through "back door" avenues by methods that are little short of subterfuge, the result is waste of our vital resources that is absolutely inexcusable.

Industry has its planners also, but the implementation of theories is always a team affair, with the ideas always being tested and checked in actual practice; evaluated by experts in the practical field; and accepted only after they have been proved workable and profitable.

We have witnessed for too long the influence exerted by theorists upon the men who should be the leaders of our nation. Perhaps one explanation is that men who for years have been underpaid and have made many sacrifices to continue in their chosen line of work, may have a distorted idea of the importance of money in gaining ends. And perhaps, too, because some of these people may have felt demeaned by having to accept a lower income level than men whom they obviously are superior to intellectually, they may have lost sight of the fact that giving alms is not the way to make friends.

Latest in this form of theorizing is the so-called "peace corps." Certainly this should prove very popular among certain elements of our younger generation because it presents an opportunity for an experience which otherwise would be beyond the means of most of them. But what match would naive young men and women with a very brief and superficial schooling in the theory of international relations, be for the tough and realistic competition which is afforded by the Communist bloc? This would be truly sending boys to do men's work. No American businessman engaged in foreign activities would think of sending a boy fresh out of college to negotiate top-level matters with foreign affiliates or subsidiaries. Nor would the foreign businessman have any respect whatsoever for a company which used such methods.

No practical and realistic person would have been guilty of the ill-advised "postcard" incident in which a young woman gave her reactions to primitive African living conditions from her viewpoint as a pampered daughter of ease and comfort. Such conditions which may be appalling to us, frequently are merely slightly sub-standard from the native viewpoint. But the judgment and understanding required in contacts with nations having different mores, standards, and aspirations than ours cannot be instilled by means of superficial indoctrination by "ivory tower" theorists.

In foreign affairs we are facing a very serious situation and it behooves us to utilize the very best talents at our command. There are many qualified and experienced people we could enlist in a voluntary effort to create understanding of and good will toward

our country, people who know circumstances and conditions in under-developed nations, who can differentiate between what we consider good and what they think good. These are the business representatives, managers of foreign plants of American industrial firms, doctors and particularly missionaries of all creeds and faiths. Look at what men like Albert Schweitzer, Dr. Tom Dooley, and Walter Judd accomplished in Africa, in Burma and in China. These are examples of dedicated men with undeviating spirit combined with sympathy and realism. This is no time for fanciful theory. This is a time for hard cold facts.

In our own country we find that the same wild theories which fail to take into account any of the serious facts of life, are often dictating our spending, our taxing, and even the rulings of our highest courts. It seems that facts mean little to many of those who head our state. All is now theorizing. All is now a matter of taking into account such things as "social consciousness," "human rights," and other euphemistic generalities without paying any attention at all to the true purpose and the planned reasons for the existence of the various branches of our government. We hear a lot of talk about human rights and to hear the conversation that goes on in high places regarding them, one would assume this was something that had been invented during the last generation. Yet we have in the Constitution of the United States and Declaration of Independence, the greatest documents in defense of human rights that were ever devised by men. They have been amended to extend these rights and if they are adhered to and if all legislation is interpreted as

to the constitutionality alone, we need have no worry about human rights. However, when theorists begin to attempt to interpret such documents to their own end and deny that any precedent is good, then we are headed for trouble.

As I stated in the beginning, I have tremendous respect and admiration for Professors on the Campus. But in our Courts, in our Diplomatic Corps, and as administrators in all areas of Government I believe most of them are completely out of place. Most are not qualified by experience and therefore are as greatly out of place as the successful businessman or statesman would be if he attempted to don professorial robes.

Let our professors concentrate on education on the Campus and leave the administration of our country to experienced, realistic and patriotic men. That is what we have to face in our foreign relations, so let us send qualified men who can hold their own with their counterparts on the other side of the Iron Curtain.

—From CANTEEN Quarterly, Winter 1961

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA
3 0112 050751905